

Some Recollections

BY

Capt. Charles P. Low



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BY  
Captain Charles P. Low

Commanding the Clipper Ships "Houqua,"  
"Jacob Bell," "Samuel Russell," and  
"N. B. Palmer," in the  
China Trade

1847-1873



"A life on the ocean wave,  
A home on the rolling deep"

*SECOND EDITION*

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FRANCES LOW PARTRIDGE  
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G530  
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This book is dedicated to my wife  
and to our seven children

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SOME RECOLLECTIONS  
BY  
CAPTAIN CHARLES P. LOW

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“And I have loved thee, Ocean! And my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
I wanton’d with thy breakers,

. . . . .  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane.”

*Byron.*

OVER and over again have I been asked by my relatives to write the story of my life, and once or twice I have begun it; but it seemed so egotistical to tell of one’s own exploits! And, then, it is so very tedious to write an experience of many years that I gave it up, not feeling equal to the task; but having at the present time a great deal of leisure, and being pressed to do it by my family, I have concluded on this first day of the New Year, 1903, to start in and try what I can do. As these papers are not for publication, but only to interest my nearest relatives, I feel less embarrassment in writing than I should if they were to go before the public. Of course, I have to trust a great deal to memory, and do not vouch for the truth of the several dates of what happened in the period of my boyhood.

I was born somewhere in Salem, Mass., on the nineteenth day of September, in the year 1824. This I presume is correct, for it so appears in the genealogical records of the Low family. I have no doubt I was the finest baby ever born, for I never knew one that was not; and I grew as other boys do, with the exception that I was, at a very early age, inclined to seek salt water. My mother told me that as soon as I could crawl I went for it, and I remember as far back as I remember anything that to be on and in the water was my supreme delight. When I was four years old, my father removed with his family to Brooklyn, N.Y. That was in 1828, and Brooklyn was a village, and more like a big farm-yard; for the pigs ran about the streets in large numbers.

My life has been a chapter of accidents. The first one occurred soon after we settled in our new home. I cannot say when, but I was not over five years old. I was plaguing the cook one Saturday afternoon while she was washing the kitchen floor, and while she was chasing me I fell on the slippery floor, and broke my left arm half-way between the wrist and the elbow. I probably suffered very much but I do not remember anything about it; and for a few years afterwards my memory fails to find anything remarkable to relate. I went to an infant school, and I presume I bent pins and set them in the teacher's chair and in the scholars' chairs when I could get a chance; and I delighted in mischief. I am quite sure I was looked upon as a bad boy; and if mischief or love of fun stands for Satan, I was one of his favorites.

I do not remember how long I continued in the infant school; but a few years after we moved to Brooklyn my father and Mr. Howard built two blocks of houses—four-story brick houses, two in a block—on Concord Street,

corner of Washington,—a splendid situation in those days, and, I think, the highest ground in the city. My father and Mr. Howard then built on Washington Street, in the rear of the houses, a large school-house which they named the Classical Hall; and soon after we moved into the new home, Mr. Eames and Mr. Putnam were called from Salem, Mass., to take charge of the school. The upper hall Mr. Eames occupied, and it was soon filled with the best young men of Brooklyn. Mr. Putnam taught the juveniles in the lower room, and altogether it made a large school and the best in the city. I went to Mr. Putnam's division.

On Adams Street, near Concord was a public school, which was a large one, and I think the only one in Brooklyn at that time. On Henry Street, near Pineapple Street, Mr. Hegeman had a large private school. A very good class of boys attended, almost as many as attended the Classical Hall. It had a belfry with a large bell which could be heard at a long distance, and which served to call the three schools to their studies. I remember the bell, for four or five of us one bitter cold night got up in the belfry and upset the bell, making it fast with the mouth up, and filled it half full of water which froze solid before morning; and it was very late the next morning when it rung again.

The public school and Hegeman's school united together to whip the boys in our school, and many were the fights with snowballs in winter and hand-to-hand contests in the summer. I remember one snowball fight which began at half-past twelve at the noon recess, with the boys of Hegeman's school, who attacked us on the corner of Washington and Concord Streets. The snowballs fell thick and fast till one o'clock, when Mr. Eames and Mr.

Putnam, bell in hand, stood in front of our school to call us in. We were backing down to answer the bell, when one of the enemy fired a hard snowball, which struck Mr. Putnam in the forehead and knocked him down. Seeing this, our boys made a rush, and chased our enemies through Concord Street to Pineapple, and did not stop till they all took refuge in their school in Henry Street. We then pelted the school-house till half-past one, when we returned to our own school and had a lecture from Mr. Eames. Mr. Putnam had recovered from the blow but had quite a lump on his forehead.

Numberless were the fights we had with the two schools, and also the individual scrimmages. I will only mention one, which caused me to be laid up two months or more with my right arm broken. We generally stayed on our playground after school, as we had a gymnasium there and were all fond of exercise. Many of the boys of the public school came every day to see us and were always ready for a fight. A boy about my own age and size took particular pains to get up a fight with me, and about once a week we had a set to, generally ending in a draw. After a number of fights he found he could not whip me. About this time I had a pair of stilts. The steps were six feet from the ground. I was walking on them in Washington Street, and not suspecting any trouble, when this boy came up behind me and tripped me up. I fell flat, with my right arm under the stilt, breaking it just below the elbow. I was carried home, and the doctor set the arm; but it was a long time before it was strong again. My father had the stilts broken up for kindling wood. I never saw that boy afterwards.

When I was twelve years old, I fell in love with a very pretty girl, and I proposed to her to be my wife and she

accepted me; but her parents shortly after moved to New York and that was the last I ever saw of her.

At this early age I was bound to go to sea, and I went to New York and got a berth on board of a brig bound to Savannah. Another boy went with me and meant to sail with me, but he backed out and so did I. I was very sorry, for I was passionately fond of the sea; and if I could only get something to float on I was happy. Even in winter I have been to Gowanus Bay and got on a cake of ice and paddled around.

Mr. Putnam's school had on one side a small room used for a hat-room. Mr. Putnam used this as a lockup for bad boys during lunch time. The outside door was a large one with a narrow window on each side. The lock of the door went into a hasp which was serewed on to the side next to the door. One day I was locked up to go without my lunch; but I had a pocket knife with the big blade broken off, and I made it into a screw-driver, and as soon as the teachers were gone I unscrewed the hasp over the lock and went home to lunch. After lunch I came back and serewed on the hasp, and no one was the wiser. Hardly a day passed but one or more boys were locked up, and as soon as the coast was clear of the teachers I would hand my knife in through one of the small panes of glass which I had broken (by accident, of course), and the prisoners released themselves and went home to lunch. I carried this on for a long time, till one day a boy got out and did not come back, and the scheme was made known by one of the good boys and I got a good scolding.

A few months after this I was sent to Mr. Marsh, who opened a classical school in a dwelling-house on Willow Street, near Pierpont Street. He had a select number

of scholars, I think about twenty all told. Many of them were much older than myself. At that time the Heights were all bare and very steep down to the water's edge, with trees growing on the side. On the top of the Heights there was a long, low building, said to have been Washington's headquarters, then occupied as an orphans' school and there were a hard set of boys attending it. Of course, our school must have a fight with them. One day we were at it, and I was standing on the edge of the bank, when one of them threw a stone which struck me on the top of the head, cutting a deep gash, and I fell over and down the bank some twenty feet, fetching up against a tree. I was picked up and carried home in a carriage, and was laid up some weeks. I finished my education at Mr. Marsh's school, and at the age of fourteen had to go to work.

My father got me a situation with Gideon Frost, a wholesale jobber of dry goods, nothing to be paid me the first year, and fifty dollars the second year. There were employed besides myself two salesmen, Horace Seaver and John Hovey. Seaver always stayed in the store and was a very mild, gentlemanly sort of a fellow and a good salesman. John Hovey was a rough diamond. He lived at the hotels, and picked up the Western merchants, dined them, took them to the theatre and showed them about the city, and then sold them a large bill of goods. This way of doing business was carried on by all the jobbing houses. Then there was one young man of about twenty-five or thirty years, William Shumacher, Leonard Frost, son of Gideon, a young fellow called Woodruff, and myself. The last three were about of an age; but though we were only fourteen years old we had to do a man's work, and hard work it was, especially in the busy season,



when we were kept at work from six A.M. till eight P.M., and very often till two o'clock in the morning, when we lay down on the counters till daylight. We were allowed a shilling (twelve and a half cents) for our meals, when so kept from our homes.

Pearl Street and Maiden Lane were then the great dry-goods streets, and all the clerks vied with one another to make the greatest show of packed boxes on the sidewalk in the morning. Marking them was quite an art, and the clerk Shumacher was an adept at it. The letters were always six inches long and made a great show. After some practice I could mark the boxes as well as any one and I took great pride in it.

During the first year I was with Gideon there were fires constantly following the great fire in 1835, and almost every night I went over with Gideon to the store to see if everything was safe. If the fire was nowhere near the store, he would go home, and I would dodge away from him and go to the fire. Though I was so young I was torch boy to Live Oak Engine No. 8 in Brooklyn. At that time New York and Brooklyn engines had their partners, and a fire in New York sent the Brooklyn engines to help there, and a fire in Brooklyn brought the New York engines over to help us. My brothers Edward and William were members of No. 8, and there was hardly a night but there was a fire in one city or the other. I was not allowed to go to a fire at night by my parents, so I got a long rope which I hid in my room, and after my brothers had gone out, I used to tie it to a trunk in the back entry and let it down to the roof of the veranda which was two stories down. Then I slid down, and from the veranda got on to a grape-vine arbor, from there to the ground and off to the fire. I always came home with my brothers

and got to my room without being seen. It was very exciting living in those days. The companies were all volunteer firemen and the engines were old-fashioned, worked by hand; and it was hard work too, as fires were so frequent. The members of the different companies were almost every evening near the engine-houses, and if there was no fire the torch boys were sent out and stationed some way apart. The one nearest the engine would start by halloing as loud as possible, "Hi! Hi!" The next would hallo, "Fire!" and soon the alarm would be spread and the engines would rush for one of the widest streets to have a race. Very often it ended in a free fight. Before I went to sea, my brothers and myself joined engine company No. 9, called the "Silk Stocking Company," because the members were all of the first families of Brooklyn. They were smart, too, and were almost always the first at a fire.

But to return to my dry-goods store. After the busy season was over we had a good deal of leisure. Gideon Frost, our employer, was a good Quaker, and every Thursday went to meeting at ten o'clock in the morning. His son Leonard and Woodruff and myself would then dodge out and go to the wharves and on board ships, and climb over the rigging, amusing ourselves by jumping on the cotton bales that were piled up for shipment. I would go to the masthead of the ships, but I could not get the other boys above the topmasthead. We always managed to get back before meeting was over.

The most tedious work I had was when the remittances came in from the South and West. The merchants there sent through the mails bank bills cut in half, one half by one mail and the other half the next day; and it seemed as though they delighted in sending small bills,—ones,



twos, and fives. I had a table with a box of paste and sheets of tissue paper cut in strips, and I had to match the bills and paste them together with these strips of tissue paper. It had to be done very nicely, and it was tiresome work, and I was always glad when it was over.

I stayed with Gideon one year, and expected to have fifty dollars the second year; but after the first month had gone he failed, and all I received for thirteen months' work was about thirty dollars worth of cloth, which I had from store for clothes.

I was now out of a situation, and my father took me as clerk in his store. He was a wholesale commission merchant in African and South American goods,—gum copal, shellac, myrrh, aloes, peppers, and so forth. The store was in Fletcher Street, just back of the dry-goods store of Gideon Frost, which ran through from Maiden Lane. Just opposite was a sailors' boarding-house; and I spent a good deal of my leisure time with the sailors, who taught me to splice and make knots, box the compass, and many other things which were a great help to me when I went to sea.

Many of the goods that came to us were very heavy, and many were very hard to handle, especially the assa-fœtida cases, which smelt horribly. We had to have eight to twelve negroes at work getting these cases in and hoisted one, two, three, and four stories, and I had the ordering of them. I never hired a man who could not sing well; and it was great fun, when they were hoisting, to hear them sing. You could have heard them a block away. The men all liked to work for me except when we had a thousand or more bags of bird peppers (small red peppers). The dust from them was something terrible, and after working an hour or so, the men would begin to

sneeze and go on sneezing till they vomited. Sometimes I had to have a dozen different gangs before the job was finished.

I liked my work very much, but all the time I was planning to get to sea. My uncle James commanded the ship *Cabot*, and he had a Dutchman for a mate, whom he had brought up from a boy. He was called Jan Jansen or John Johnson, and he was a very smart seaman. He took a great fancy to me, and I spent all the time I could get when he was in port aboard his ship. He taught me much in the way of seamanship. The most important thing, which helped me more than anything else on my first voyage, was how to send down a royal yard. I learned from him all the running rigging; and, as it is the same on all ships, I was a good sailor and I knew just where to find a rope when I first went to sea.

When I was about sixteen years old, I met with an accident in which I narrowly escaped being killed. I was shipping clerk as well as receiving clerk in my father's store; and one hot day in July I had to go down to a schooner just arrived from Salem with a load of gum copal. Some twenty-five cases were to be transhipped, and I was to take off the weights and mark the cases for their new destination. It was noon and the carman was feeding his horses, and I was waiting to ride down with him, as it was nearly a mile from the store to the place where the schooner lay discharging. The horse and cart were at the corner of Fletcher and Pearl Streets, facing the East River. The driver was around the corner at a dry-goods store. I sat on the cart, singing, "Old Low! Old Low's son! Never saw so many Lows since the world begun." Whether my musical voice pleased the horse or scared him I cannot say, but he started off. I jumped up

and took the reins, and said if he was ready I was, intending to drive him around to the dry-goods store and get the driver. The horse turned short around into Pearl Street, and headed up the wrong way and I could not turn him an inch. He started on a run, and the more I hauled on the lines the faster he went. Now the cart was one of the old-fashioned two-wheelers, and very heavy. In the front was a stationary rung to tie the reins to, called the monitor. I found out that the horse was running away. It being the noon hour, the street was clear of vehicles; and I thought as long as the horse kept straight on I could hold on fast enough, but he turned around into Platt Street, and so suddenly that he upset the cart and fell himself. The monitor broke, and the horse stopped just long enough for me to fall on the pavement. One leg went under one wheel and my head under the other, and then the horse recovered himself and started again. Why my head was not smashed no one could tell, but the skin was taken off my left ear, and on the right side of my head there was a lump as big as a hen's egg, and my ankle was dislocated and badly mashed. Both wheels had gone over me. They picked me up for dead and carried me into a store on the corner. I was insensible and did not come to till I was placed in a carriage, and found my father and brother Josiah with me, on the way to Brooklyn. It was a long and painful experience for many weeks. I could only lie on my back and suffer, and it was six months before I was able to walk without a crutch; but I recovered, and went back to the store again and went to work on new plans for going to sea.

I subscribed to *Judd's Agriculturist* and studied farming, intending to go on a farm and make a little money to buy a sailor's outfit, and then run away to sea; but I did not

like the runaway business, and so I told my brother what my object was in trying a farmer's life, and I knew he would tell my father and mother. And so he did. About this time my brother Abbot came home from China, and he objected very much to my going to sea, and my father offered to take me into partnership when I was twenty. What my life would have been if I had accepted his offer I cannot say, but I refused it. I could not give up the sea. I loved it and I was sure I should be unhappy on shore. At any rate I felt I must try it.

Before I forget it I must tell of a laughable accident I met with. I had a great friend named Pardon Taylor. We were always together. We went over to the city together and came home together, and spent our evenings with one another. He was in a wholesale grocery store on Front Street, and when his store closed before mine he came and waited for me, and *vice versa*. On this particular day in the month of August, I got through first and went down to his store. He was in a quandary, for his employer wished him to take a horse over to Brooklyn, and he had an engagement up town. Well, I never had been on a horse's back, but I offered to take the horse home for him. As I said, it was in August and very hot weather, and I was dressed in white jacket and trousers. I mounted the horse and went along Front Street till I came to Wall Street. Here the street was very wide and filled with auctioneers who sold whole cargoes of teas, sugar, and molasses. On this special day the hogsheads of molasses were stretched nearly across the street, and the molasses was streaming from the bungholes. As I passed one of the outer hogsheads, I suppose I pulled the rein too hard to turn the horse. At any rate, he sidled up against the hogshead and I slipped off right on top of the bung-

hole. Well, I was in a nice mess, with the seat of my trousers covered with molasses; but there was no help for it, and I got on the horse again and steered for Fulton Ferry. I got safely on the ferry-boat, but I did not get off the horse. It was getting dark when I rode up to the merchant's house, so I felt a little more comfortable; but I was a little doubtful about getting off the horse, for fear he would run away. So I hauled up to a street lamp-post and jumped for it, and thus slid down to the sidewalk, tied the horse and informed the people in the house that I had brought the horse from New York. Then I left in a hurry. When I got home and told my story, I thought my brothers and sisters would die of laughing, but I soon had a wash and clean clothes on and was ready for another lark. However, I told my friend that when there was another horse to go over the river he would have to take it himself.

I will now leave the history of my boyhood. We had lots of fun and never did anything that was really wicked, but we created a good deal of talk about the bad boys of Brooklyn. To sum all up, a young lady that I was in love with told me, when I came back from my first voyage, that the city dismissed a third of the constables after I went to sea.

My brother Abbot came home from China with quite a good-sized fortune, thinking he did not care to continue in business; but he hired an office where he could write letters and look after his affairs, and it was not long before he took my brother Edward and then my brother Josiah into his employ, and began his new career in the China trade. After his marriage with Miss Ellen Dow, in March, 1841, he built a topsail schooner called the *Mazeppa*, one of the handsomest vessels of the kind I ever saw, destined

for the East India and China trade. My brothers went down to Sandy Hook when she sailed and took me with them. Just before the steam tug cast off, I got into one of the bread lockers in hopes they would not miss me, and thus I could get away to sea; but they were on the watch for me and my brother Josiah set the captain and mate after me, who soon found me half suffocated, and sent me on board the tug. But this attempt, and the story my brothers told my parents about my plan of going on a farm and about my running away, had its effect upon them, and they realized that I must go to sea and try it. But it was some time yet before my wishes were gratified.

In the mean time I was making myself ready. By daily visits to ships and talking to the sailors in the boarding-house opposite I learned a great deal, and later on I went to a navigation school and studied navigation under an old sea captain.

In May, 1842, my brother William married Miss Bedell of Brooklyn, and it was understood that in the fall they were to go to China. So about the middle of October they engaged passage in the *Horatio*, Captain Howland, master, and, what was better than that, my brother Abbot secured a berth for me as boy on board the same ship. After he had secured it, he wanted to know how I was going to make a living, as boys had no wages. I immediately replied, "As soon as the voyage is over, I will ship again." My brother William told me I need not be afraid of starving, he would see me all right. My father gave me fifty dollars and a sailor's outfit, which cost about thirty dollars more, and my freedom; that is, I was not to depend on him any further, but make my own way in the world.

The fifth day of November, 1842, was the day set for



sailing and I could hardly wait, I was so anxious to be off. At ten o'clock A.M. the tug came alongside, and my brothers and sisters and some six or eight of the Bedell girls, sisters of my brother William's wife, went down to Sandy Hook to see us off. The day was pleasant, and we had a good start. After leaving the pilot and guests we were kept hard at work stowing the anchors and getting sail on the ship. It being a fair wind we did not stop work till all the studding-sails were set and we were nearly out of sight of land. After the decks were cleared up all hands were called aft and the watches chosen. We had for officers: Captain Howland; first mate, Mr. Wood; second mate, Mr. Howard; third mate, Mr. Jennings. The first mate was a short, well-built man and a good sailor and officer. The second mate was a taller and larger man, and a very smart man in every way, but he was the most profane man I ever met. Mr. Jennings, the third mate, was an active, good-natured fellow and understood his work. In fact they were all about as well fitted for their positions as I have ever known men to be. The watches were chosen by the first and second mates. One chooses a man, and then the other chooses, till the crew are equally divided. The captain then addresses the men, telling them he expects them to be quick at a call and to do their duty at all times, and that if they do, they will be well fed and have a pleasant voyage, but if they do not, they will have a rough time of it. At six P.M. the captain's watch went below, ready to turn out at eight P.M. and stay on deck till midnight. The rule on board ship is for the captain to take the ship out, and the mate to bring her home; that is, the captain's watch, which is looked out for by the second mate, has the first eight hours on deck,—that is, from eight to twelve P.M. and from four

to eight A.M. And, coming home, the mate's watch has the same time the first night out.

The sailmaker and carpenter and we four boys had bunks in the between-decks, just forward of the cabin. The men all slept forward in the forecabin. The ship not being full of cargo, there was plenty of room. The sailmaker and carpenter both worked down in the between-decks. Our cargo consisted of two or three hundred tons of pig lead, lumber, and cotton goods, which filled up the lower hold. Water, ship stores, and spare sails were all that were in between-decks.

The first two days out we had fine weather, but the ship rolled enough to make all the boys seasick. I escaped, however, not feeling the least uncomfortable, but enjoying it all. The third day came on with fresh winds, which soon amounted to a gale, and orders were given to send down the royal yards, and I jumped for the main rigging, when the mate sung out to me, "Where in h—l are you going to?"

I said I was going to send down the royal yard. He wanted to know what I knew about it. I merely replied that I could send it down.

"Then go ahead, and be quick about it!" he said, at the same time calling an ordinary seaman to go up with me; and I thought he told him to help me only if I got stuck. But I was confident I could do it, and I did it. Having got the heaviest of all three down first, after securing the lifts and braces to the masts, I came down, and the mate said, "Well done, Charlie!" Afterwards when everything was snug, he called me and wanted to know if I had been to sea before, and, if not, where I had learned to send down a royal yard. I told him, and he wanted to know if I could box the compass. I told him I could and that I



should like to steer the ship. He said he would give me a chance as soon as the weather was better.

I found my knowledge helped me very much, for the other boys had to feed the pigs and fowls and do the dirty work, though to be sure I had to do the slushing the masts with them, which is the worst and dirtiest of all the duties a boy is called upon to do. The topsail, topgallant, and royal yards hoist up and down, a peril, or band, keeping them to the masts; and the masts must be well slushed or greased to have them move easily, and they must be slushed at least once a week. It is generally a Saturday's job. The boy, one for each mast, has an oyster tin or some other tin holding a quart or more of slush which he has to get from the cook. Now this is his first trouble, for the slush is the cook's perquisite, because it is the grease which comes from boiling the men's beef and pork. Some cooks will make ten or twelve barrels during a year's voyage, and they do not like the boys to touch it, and they swear at them if they drop or waste it. After getting the slush the boy has to provide a piece of flannel to rub it on the mast with. Now for a greenhorn or a boy to take this can of slush to the masthead without spilling some on his shirt bosom or on his pants, or getting it on his hands, is a very difficult job. Going up the rigging that has ratlines to step on, such as the lower and topmast rigging, is very well; but when you get to the topgallant rigging, where there are only two shrouds to climb up, and then to the royal and skysail masts, with only one rope to climb, then comes the trouble. If you can get safely to the skysail masthead without grease on your hands you are fortunate, but not altogether safe, for you have to dip the rag in the slush and rub it on the after side of the mast from top to bottom, and you have to hold on with one hand and slide down

the backstay, greasing the mast as you go, first the skysail mast, then the royal mast, then the topgallant mast, and, last of all the topmast. If you have been fortunate enough not to grease yourself from head to foot and not to spill any slush on deck, you are a lucky fellow. This job I hated. Tarring down the rigging was easy compared to this slushing job. Altogether I was pretty fortunate as far as dropping the can or spilling on deck was concerned, but generally my clothes had a good share of the cook's slush.

The living I stood very well, for I had a ravenous appetite. Mondays we had salt beef and bread for breakfast, dinner, and supper, with a mixture at breakfast called coffee, a quart to each one, boiled with molasses. It did very well to soak biscuit in, and after a while I could drink it and think it good. Tuesday we had salt pork for breakfast, bean soup and salt pork for dinner, and a quart of vinegar was allowed us on bean day. Friday we had the same bill of fare. Wednesday we had scouse, or beef hash mixed with potatoes, or if no potatoes, ship's biscuits soaked and mixed with the beef. I was very fond of scouse. This was a good breakfast. For dinner we had, in addition to salt beef, boiled rice. Each man and boy had six large spoonfuls of molasses to eat with the rice. The sailmaker used to measure our allowance of molasses, and he would stint us boys if he could, so as to have more for himself. Thursday we had scouse for breakfast and flour pudding, or duff, for dinner. Friday the same as Tuesday, bean soup. Saturday codfish and potatoes or rice. Sunday's bill of fare was the same, except that our flour pudding or duff had a few raisins which made it plum pudding. Every night we had a quart of a mixture called tea, boiled the same as the coffee, with

molasses for sweetening. Such was the bill of fare through the outward bound voyage, and I shall refer no more to that. I got used to it and enjoyed all my meals. I also enjoyed cutting a piece of raw salt pork from the harness cask at ten o'clock at night, and walking the deck with a hard navy biscuit and the pork. A barrel of navy bread was kept in the steerage and forecastle, and we were allowed as much as we could eat; and it was very good on the voyage out.

As soon as we crossed the Gulf Stream and got into steady weather, the mate sent me to the lee wheel to accustom myself to steering. The man at the weather wheel, or the one who really did the steering let me take his place and I soon learned how to keep the ship to its course. I had sailed boats, and knew very well what it was to sail a course, or on a wind, the only difference being that the ship steered by a wheel, the boats by a tiller; and very soon I was told to take my regular trick at the wheel, which is two hours at a time.

Captain Howland was an aristocratic captain. He came on deck at stated times and always wore kid gloves. He was a very stern-faced man. He was a good navigator, but not much of a sailor, having taken command without going through the forecastle. He would never allow himself forward of the mainmast and very seldom spoke to a sailor, but gave all his orders to the chief mate, and kept strict discipline.

I think that we had been at sea over two weeks before I had a word with my sister. My brother had come once or twice forward of the mainmast to have a short chat with me, but one day when I was at the wheel and the captain down below, my sister came and spoke to me, and we had quite a little talk together, though it was contrary to the

rules of the ship to talk to the man at the wheel. I have no doubt I could have had more communication with both my brother and my sister if I had chosen to do so, but I was afraid to do anything to show that I looked for favors on account of having a brother and sister on board. The men liked me all the better for it. They saw that I could do my duty and more than a boy's duty and that I did not put on any airs. My sister thought Captain Howland was an ideal captain; and a few years afterwards when I was to take charge, she told me I must pattern after Captain Howland, be dignified and keep to the quarter-deck. I told her I should be captain of my ship and go to any part of it I wished to; that the quarter-deck was not big enough for me; and that I had never worn a pair of gloves and did not intend to, especially on board a ship.

As the weeks flew by I became more in love with my sea life, and I got along well with officers and men. I was perfectly fearless. I could hold my weight with one hand, and I was as much at home on the royal yard as on deck.

One afternoon the watch on deck to which I belonged were sent aloft to bend a new main-topgallant sail. It was blowing fresh. The sail was hoisted up to the mast-head by the bunt, or middle. The third mate was out on the topgallant yard, and I took the earing—a piece of ratline stuff that fastens the sail to the yard arm—and ran out on top of the yard with it to the third mate. He turned pale to see me, and told me to get down on the foot rope as quickly as possible. While there bending the sail, the other watch were called from below to reef the topsail. It was blowing a gale and it was as much as we could do to get the sail bent and furled. I thought nothing of what I had done and after the sails were reefed and everything made snug, it was my watch below and I went

down in the fore-castle to talk with the men. I had hardly got there when the second mate called for me, and gave me an awful scolding and told me that if I attempted to run out on a topgallant yard again, he would take my hide off. At the same time I could see he thought well of me for doing it; and my brother afterward told me that Mr. Howard said I was the smartest boy he ever saw on board a ship. I hate to say so much of myself, but it is partly to show why I was promoted so quickly to a command.

There was only one time I think, that I growled about the living. We were put on an allowance of water, a gallon a day. One quart had to go to the cook for coffee and one for tea. It would not have been so bad if the water had been good. The water was stowed between-decks in two-hundred-gallon casks, and the bungs were left out to give it air. Now the sailmaker owned a mon-goose which he had carried with him two or three voyages. It was a beautiful animal, something between a squirrel and a weasel, and it was very tame, and the sailmaker thought very much of it. One day it disappeared and could not be found anywhere. Some weeks after it was gone, the sailmaker, who had the dealing out of the water, broached a new cask, which smelled horribly and tasted worse. But we had to drink it. We went to the mate about it and asked for better water, but he said it was good enough, it was only fermenting and would soon be pure and good. We had to drink that cask of water till we got near the bottom. Then the pump began to bring up hairs which resembled those of the departed mon-goose, and on examination the poor remains of the animal were brought forth. We had been drinking extract of mon-goose. Some of the boys were made sick when they

found it out, but my stomach was not affected, though I was glad to know we were going to have better water to drink.

After a short passage of some eighty days we arrived at Anjer, a small village on the coast of Java, about eighty miles from Batavia. Here all ships stop on their way out to and home from China. The natives raise chickens and ducks and fruit of all kinds,—bananas, oranges, mangosteens, limes, pineapples, and cocoanuts. We were allowed all fruits but the pineapple. The officers were told not to allow one to come on board, as they are considered very dangerous, giving the men dysentery, and in Batavia the foreigners will not eat them without soaking them in brandy over night. After living on salt beef and pork, we were hungry enough for the delicious fruit and some fresh beef. Green turtles are very plentiful, and we had one or two tastes of turtle steak. They are very good for cabin stores, as they require nothing to eat and no water to drink, being stowed away on their backs with a wet swab under their heads, and keeping fat for three or four weeks.

We filled our empty casks with good water and got underweigh, and proceeded through the Java Sea into the Banda Sea, out into the Pacific Ocean, through Dampier Straits. It is a much longer way to go than through the China Sea, but at that season of the year the north-east monsoon blew heavily, and it would have been almost impossible to beat up against the wind and currents setting strong to the south-west. The *Horatio* was then the fastest of the East India ships, but she could not make over ten miles an hour. However, we arrived in Hong Kong in one hundred days, the shortest time by the eastern passage that had been made up to that date. It was



the 13th of February when we anchored in the harbor of Hong Kong. This island had only been handed over to the English a short time before, and we merely stopped for orders and then proceeded to Macao, forty miles to the west. Macao was a Portuguese colony, but all the American and English firms at Canton had branch houses there, and lived there a good deal of the time during the summer months. It is an open harbor, but has good anchorage and is safe in the north-east monsoon. Some four miles from the anchorage the opium ships were anchored in the river Typa, out of sight from Macao, and there they smuggled opium to the Chinese, who came in large, fast boats to get it. It was a favorite place for the mates to go and spend the evening, as they had plenty of drink and eatables and card playing. The captain lived on shore. We boys, four of us, had nothing to do but take care of the boats; and pretty much every evening after supper the boat's crew were called away to take one or two of the mates aboard the opium ships. It was not a hard run into the Typa River, but coming back at any hour between midnight and two o'clock in the morning, with a strong head wind and rough sea, was anything but fun, and very hard work, and we were very wet and cold when we got on deck. We generally had a good time in the forecastle while the mates enjoyed themselves in the cabin of the opium smuggler; and as we had very little to do in the daytime but to pull ashore to get orders from the captain, and often when we had to wait were taken up to the merchants' house and had a good dinner given to us, we enjoyed the life very much.

While laying in Macao Roads, the men were employed on the rigging, sending down the topgallant masts, scraping and painting them, cleaning ship, inside and out, painting

and putting her in beautiful shape before going to Wham-po-a to load for home. After the masts were all on end, the rigging had to be tarred down, and the boat's crew were called to do the light work. I was the lightest boy on board, and I was given the job of tarring the small stays that run from the royal masthead to the opposite mast. I sat on a piece of board called a boatswain's chair, which was made fast by a rope over the stay to be tarred, and a gantline rove through a block at the masthead, and lowered from the deck. I did not dislike the job, but my hands when I got through were as black as the tar itself; and just as I got through the mate gave me an invitation from Russell & Co. to dine there with my brother and sister. I accepted, and on the day appointed went on shore dressed up in my best, and presented myself to my sister. When she looked at my hands she was terribly mortified, but my brother told her that every one knew what it was and that it was no discredit to me. I thought at one time she was going to protest against my going to the dinner table, but she came at last to look at it as a sort of joke, and I went in to the table with her: and, though as many as twenty people sat down to dinner, none of them took any notice of my hands. I had a splendid dinner, for the foreigners and Americans lived on the best the land afforded, and that was as good as could be had in any part of the world. The fish market cannot be surpassed for the different varieties and the flavor of the fish, both salt water and fresh, and the Chinese cooks are adepts in cooking them. The turkeys are brought mostly from Manila, and they are shut up in cellars and fattened. All sorts of game are in abundance, and the Chinamen are famous for their rich and juicy capons, which are almost as large as turkeys. The



fruits are also abundant—bananas, oranges, and peaches—and very cheap.

Soon after this dinner, the captain had orders to proceed to Whampoa to get ready to take in cargo for home. We were very glad to leave Macao, for in the harbor the ship rolled in the rough sea almost as badly as at sea, and water casks and spars had to be lashed all the time. Whampoa is ninety miles from Macao and twelve miles from Canton. The ships can go no farther up the river, and the cargo is brought down in chop boats or large covered lighters, which will carry from eight hundred to fifteen hundred half chests of tea at a load.

We had a very good trip up, having a fair wind and a flood tide which took us up beyond the Boge forts, about forty miles from Whampoa, where we anchored to wait over the ebb tide, which runs very strong. Here we lay at anchor some six hours and the next tide carried us to our anchorage at Whampoa. The river here is very narrow, and ships have to moor with two anchors, and it was a long job in those days when ships had a common windlass worked with handspikes. The ship runs up the river, and if a good, strong breeze blows she makes a running moor; that is, she lets go the port anchor, on which a large quantity of chain has been overhauled; as soon as the chain is taut more is paid out, till there are ninety fathoms out, when a slight sheer is given and the other anchor is let go, and as soon as the ship begins to go astern, chain is paid out and the first chain is hove in, till there are forty-five fathoms on the second chain, and then she lies in the middle. On the flood tide she rides with the first anchor let go; on the ebb tide she rides at the second anchor, and swings around in her own length.

Here the captain left, and the boat's crew were sum-

moned to pull him up to Canton, where he took up his abode with Russell & Co., the consignees of the ship. It was a pull of twelve miles and with the tide against us was a hard pull; but we had had a good apprenticeship to the oars at Macao, and we did not mind it very much, especially as we were all sent up to the house and had a good breakfast or dinner or supper, depending on the time we got to the city.

The second day after we anchored in Whampoa, we had to unmoor ship after six P.M., and haul alongside of an English ship to discharge our pig lead. It is so long ago that I have forgotten the precise way of doing the work, but it was a smuggling job. Every ship had a mandarin or custom house officer in his boat longside, or astern, to keep the ship from smuggling, but they were bribed on this occasion, and had gone on shore for the night, and the ship we were about to put the lead on board of had an open manifest, so that anything on her manifest was supposed to have been brought from England, and to have paid duties on her arrival. As it would not do to use our Chinese stevedores to do the work, the ship's crew had to do it, and it was one of the hardest night's work I ever did. Myself and three others were in the lower hold, and we had to pass the pigs of lead, which weighed sixty pounds each, up to a stage five feet above us, two of us at a time; then others passed them to another stage, and so on, on to the deck of the English ship. At first the pigs of lead felt very light,—sixty pounds between two of us,—but they grew very heavy after we had heaved them for two or three hours, notwithstanding we were relieved every half hour, and had a half hour's rest; before morning it was as much as we could do to lift a bar to the staging. But there was no help for it,

we had to do it. However, everything comes to an end and the last pig was finally sent up. This, however, did not end the job, for we had to haul the ship back to her anchorage and remoor her in her old berth, which was hard work but different, and it was a relief to get out in the air; but we did not get our breakfast till very late in the morning. I have never forgotten that night's work; we were allowed four hours' sleep after we had our breakfast, and I for one never knew what sleep was until that time.

After this smuggling job was over, we boys were sent to boat's duty again. We had to pull to Canton twelve miles, generally starting from three to seven o'clock in the morning, according as the tide served, for it made a great difference whether we pulled with the tide or against it. With a good, strong flood tide we would go up in an hour and a half; then against the tide it would take us four hours and more. We had a good deal of fun, for over a dozen boats would start about the same time, and we used to race to see who would get there first; and as soon as we arrived at the jetty at Canton we were met by Chinese runners, and taken up to Hog Lane, China street, old China street, where they gave us tea and pork, chops and boiled eggs. This they did to secure our patronage on the day when we had our liberty, with money to spend in their store. After eating a good breakfast with the Chinamen, we went around to our consignees and had another hearty breakfast, which was always prepared for the boat's crew and officer, and was always a good one, and after a pull of twelve miles without any breakfast we could stow away a good deal of provisions. Sometimes we were delayed in Canton till after dinner or lunch time, when we had a good dinner, at the consignee's, but more often we had to pull back to the ship, and very often had

to make another trip to Canton in the afternoon, which made forty-eight miles of rowing in twelve or fifteen hours; and one day we made three trips, or seventy-two miles in twenty-four hours, which is a pretty hard day's work. The worst of that day's work was getting back to the ship at midnight, and finding that we could not go below because the ship was being smoked to kill the rats. It was raining hard and it was difficult to find a good dry place where we could sleep, so we lay down on deck, with a stick of wood for a pillow and a monkey jacket over us, and slept as the weary sleep.

Ships always have more or less rats on board, and it is necessary to clear them out before taking in cargo. To do this, the hatches are all closed, and the seams all pasted over with paper, as are the cabin doors, skylights and portholes, and the ship made air-tight. Then large fires are built under the fore, main and after hatches on the ballast, with charecoal and sulphur. Tubs of water are placed near the fires and holes bored in the hatches so that a lookout can be kept for any accident; then the hatches are sealed up tight and kept closed for twenty-four hours. The fires burn up the air, and the rats come from every part of the ship and go for the fires, for the air lasts at the fires longer than elsewhere, and besides they want water; and there they die. The poor Chinese know when a ship is being smoked, and when the hatches will be opened, and they gather around the ship to pick up the rats when they are thrown overboard. As soon as the rats are caught they are skinned and cleaned and hung up in the boats. It is some time after the hatches are opened before you can go below with safety, and when the air is purified, every part of the ship is searched for the dead rats which are found everywhere, though the largest

number are around the water tubs and the fires. Some ships will throw out a thousand dead rats. I could not state how many we caught, but I think there were over two hundred. While on the subject of vermin, I may tell of the pest of cockroaches which are really more troublesome than the rats, for they eat the labels off the tea chests. They will gnaw your toe nails and eat your boots and your oil clothing, and will fly in your faces; on one occasion they drove all the watch below on deck. They could not sleep for the numbers that kept crawling over them and flying about. To drive them away Chinese are hired, who come on board with rattan bushel baskets which they fill with bait. In one day and night they have been known to catch over thirty bushels of cockroaches. This is a fact and any one who has sailed in a China ship in old times will vouch for the truth of it.

After the ship is cleared of rats and roaches, the ballast is trimmed and the Chinese stevedores take charge of the hold; and it is most interesting to see them stow the tea away with boxes of firecrackers and mats of cassia. They make such close stowing that you can hardly get a case knife between the chests.

A few days before the cargo is completed, half of the crew are given liberty and take the boats and go to Canton. The Chinese shopkeepers know they are coming, and their runners meet them at the jetty and call out, "Come my shop, catehee tea, pork, chops, boil 'em eggs!" And some of the men go to one shop and some to others, and spend their money at the shop where they are treated. Very little tea is drunk, for these Chinamen know well enough that sailors want something stronger than that, so they give them gin, brandy, or anything they call for. Very few sailors in those days left Canton without help

after the day was done; fortunately they had but little money to spend. The next day the other half of the crew had liberty. When my turn came and I had ten dollars given me by the Captain, as my brother was in Canton, I spent the day at Russell & Co.'s. Had a good breakfast, lunch and dinner and enjoyed the day very much. Bought presents to take home and invested the fifty dollars given me by my father in pongee or silk handkerchiefs. The liberty day being over, all hands were employed bending sails and getting ready for sea. The water casks we filled from the river, which is very muddy. At night two casks were filled and the next morning when the mud had settled, the clear water was run into other casks and the mud washed out of the first two. Then they were filled up again and emptied, and so on, till all our casks were filled with good, clean water; and it was very good too.

As the ship was now nearly loaded, the boys who had been living in between-decks had to go to the forecabin and live with the sailors. There not being room enough or bunks to sleep in we had to turn in and out, one watch being on deck while the other watch took their bunks. I was fortunate in being messmate with a very clean, neat Dutchman, also a good sailor, and we got along very well together, but it was not pleasant to turn into a bed that was hot and had just been slept in, especially in hot weather. However, one gets used to most everything and I had the faculty of putting up with whatever came to hand, and could stand almost anything, though I growled with the rest for the fun of the thing,—a sailor cannot get along without a little of that. This would be nothing if it went no further, but the forecabin of a merchant ship was a perfect hell in those days. When the



watch went below at eight o'clock they would all light their pipes and turn in, and then each one would try to see which could be the most profane. They would begin and damn the captain, and then the officers, and at last each other, till their pipes were out and they went off to sleep.

I think it was the last of April when we got under weigh, and with twenty or thirty sampans, or China boats towing us, we proceeded through the shipping, and after crossing the first bar made sail and dropped with the tide till we got room to work the ship. Then with a light wind we soon passed the Boca Tigris forts, and in a few days were out in the China Sea, homeward bound. A ship with a tea cargo is very buoyant and is not deep in the water and sails very well. We passed Anjer and through the Straits of Sunda, taking the southeast trade winds. Running before them made rapid progress across the Indian Ocean towards the Cape of Good Hope. About all I remember of this passage was that soon after leaving Java we were put on short allowance of salt beef and pork; the salt provisions having been sold by the officers to pay their bills in Whampoa, unbeknown to the captain. From Madagascar to the Cape we had variable winds.

Off Cape Agulhas, where the current runs very strong to the westward, which is a great help to ships bound around the Cape, the winds are almost always ahead and blow heavily most of the time; but it raises a very short and high sea in which the vessel makes very bad weather of it. The *Horatio* was a short ship and in this sea she would almost stand on end sometimes,—the sailors called her “the pile driver.” As usual we had heavy weather, and I was called to go aloft and furl the main-royal, the ship pitching at a fearful rate; all hands were shortening sail, and I had just about got the sail fast when

the vessel pitched very suddenly and so deep that the fore and main-topgallant mast went over the side. I went over with the main and, fortunately, caught the topmast rigging without being hurt. I got down quickly and I think I was badly scared, for I thought the ship was going down bow first. It was a very narrow escape, for if I had not held on hard I should have been thrown a long way from the ship and probably have been drowned. After sail was reduced it was late in the evening before we got the wreck of the masts on deck, and as the masts were not wanted till the gale abated, we did not send the new ones up, but had them all ready.

While close in to Cape Agulhas we hove the lead with two fish hooks attached and brought up two fine fish, and every time we tacked ship we hove the lead again and brought up fish, catching enough for all hands, and they tasted good, for we had been on short allowance for a long time. We sighted Cape of Good Hope, and after getting to the westward of it took a southeast wind, and with all sail set before the wind we made rapid headway into fine weather.

We were all anxious to get home, for the crew were worked from morning to night scraping spars, painting ship inside and out, and getting ready for port. There was nothing but grumbling on the part of the sailors, for we were daily being put on shorter allowance; the rice and beans gave out and we had nothing but salt beef and pork and very little of those. But the wind held good and about the middle of August we took a pilot off Sandy Hook and before night were alongside of the wharf.

My brother Josiah was the only one to greet me, and I was very glad to see him. He told me there was no one at home but Ellen. My father and mother had gone to



Vermont and my sister Sarah had gone to England to spend a year with her sister Harriet, and the rest of the family were scattered at different summer resorts, so I made up my mind to go to London and see my sisters.

The day after we arrived I went down to the *Horatio* to be paid off. I had been doing ordinary seaman's work the whole voyage and I thought I ought to have some wages paid me; but no, I had shipped as a boy with no wages, and there was no help for me. I felt badly and very much disappointed. Then, as I intended shipping on board the *Toronto*, Captain Griswold, I asked Captain Howland to give me a recommendation, but he said he never gave a written recommendation to any one. I was mad enough to hit him and left as quickly as possible. The next day I went on board of the *Toronto* to see if I could get a berth as ordinary seaman. The Captain was in the cabin and I asked the steward if I could see him. He asked what my name was, and I told him. He said, "Charley Low step right in, for Captain Howland has been here and given you the best character a boy ever had; he says you are the smartest boy he ever had on board his ship." Upon hearing this I felt a good deal better towards my old Captain, and passed into the cabin and asked the Captain if there was any chance for me as ordinary seaman. He was a man of very few words and I liked his looks. He said that my old Captain had been there, and that he was glad to give me a berth, and he made out an order for me to go and sign the shipping articles. I felt as light as a feather, and thanking him, went at once to the shipping office and signed as ordinary seaman, at eleven dollars a month and two months' advance, which I pocketed. I then went to my brother's office and told him I had shipped on board the packet

ship *Toronto*, and was to sail in five days. He was very sorry and tried to persuade me not to go so soon; said that the family would soon be at home and would be much disappointed in not finding me. But it was of no use, and in seven days from the time I passed Sandy Hook I was on my way out.

The *Toronto* was double the size of the *Horatio* and every spar and sail was heavy, so as to stand the heavy weather of the North Atlantic. She was fitted to carry one hundred cabin passengers and three or four hundred in the steerage. In those days there were no steamers and as every one had to go to Europe in these packets the cabins were beautifully furnished and the fare was as good as at any hotel in New York. We had a crew of thirty seamen and four ordinaries, no boys. The crew was made up of the hardest kind of men; they were called "hoosiers," working in New Orleans or Mobile during the winter at stowing ships with cotton, and in the summer sailing in the packet ships. They were all good chantey men; that is, they could all sing at their work and were good natured and could work hard, but they did not care much about the officers and would not be humbugged or hazed. Besides this large crew, we had as steerage passengers twenty men from the ship *Coromandel*, an East India ship that had come home from a two years' voyage, who were going to London on a spree. The steerage passage cost only "fifteen dollars and find themselves." They were also a jolly set of fellows and when we reefed topsails or made sail they all joined in with us, so that our work was easy and we could reef and hoist all three topsails at once, with a different song for each one. In the dog watch, from six to eight in the evening, they would gather on the forecastle and sing

comic songs and negro melodies. There were two or three violins and accordions with them, and the time passed very much more pleasantly than on board the *Horatio*, where gambling was the order of the day; besides, after being on short allowance for two months I had as much as I could eat. The cook would have fared badly on board that ship if he had not done his best in making scouse and duff. But I was surprised one day. We had some fifty or more cabin passengers, and the first two or three days out they were seasick, but the steward had to provide for them as if they were well, with the result that we had lots of cabin fare sent to the forecandle: turkeys, chickens, mutton, beef, pies and puddings, and the salt beef and pork was not dealt out. It was a feast to me, but two days were too much for the men, and they went aft in a body and told the Captain they did not ship to eat "cabin grub," and they would do no more work till they had their salt beef and pork again. The captain said nothing but "All right, my men, you shall have your beef and pork." I thought they were big fools, for if they had waited a little longer they would have had no more cabin fare, for the passengers soon got well and had sea appetites and could all eat their allowance. In two or three days more the sailors growled because they did not get any of the good things, but that is sailor-like, they must growl about something, no matter what it is; it is their nature. I had no reason to complain, for the steward took a great fancy to me and many pieces of chicken and pie and pudding he kept for me in the pantry, calling me to him when I had my watch below.

We had very favorable winds, and after a run of seventeen days, took a pilot off Land's End in the English Channel. In going up the Thames we had a pilot whom

the sailors called "Staysail Jack." We had to drop up with the tide, which was done by placing the ship broad-side to the tide. To keep her so, we had to haul out the spanker to bring her to and haul down the fore staysail; and every few minutes it was "Brail up the spanker and haul down the staysail," and *vice versa*. And this was kept up till we hauled alongside of the St. Katherine dock.

The London docks are all enclosed, and you can only enter at high tide, slack water; and as soon as the ship is in, the gates are shut. It was very late in the evening when we entered, and while hauling in, the two crews united in singing, and made such noise that the dock master requested the mates to stop them, as they would wake up the whole of London. But when the sailors heard this they only sang the louder and only stopped when the ship was made fast.

There is, or was, much smuggling done by the sailors in tobacco, and a number of them had stored a lot of it in the bunt of the topsails, intending to get it when they had a chance to take it ashore. What was their surprise the next morning, when the Custom-house officers came on board and immediately went aloft and loosed the sails! Down came the tobacco, which was seized and taken to the Custom-house and confiscated. Then every sailor had to give up his tobacco to the mate, who weighed it and gave the men a receipt for it, and every two or three days dealt it out to them for use. Thus it was evident that there was an informer on board. The men supposed it must be a certain sanctimonious old fellow. So they brought him to trial in the fore-castle, had a jury, and appointed me as judge. It was great sport. He was convicted and sentenced to receive a dozen lashes, and it is

needless to say he was an enemy of mine from that time on. But the sailors drove him out of the ship.

The crew of the *Coromandel* left at once, and it was only a few days before their money was gone, and they had to ship and go to sea. Some of them came on board our ship and begged for a part of our grub. They were a sorry lot of men; they had their spree, and dearly they paid for it.

A few nights after we were docked we were roused out of our sleep by a pounding on the scuttle and a loud voice calling out "Tumble up there, tumble up, your ship is on fire." We were not long dressing; and coming on deck we found the cook's galley all of a blaze, but we manned the pump and with plenty of buckets we put it out, just as the first fire engine came alongside. After this, fires were forbidden except in the morning to get our breakfast with; for dinner, we were sent to an eating house on Ratcliffe Highway, a short distance outside the dock gate. I only remember that we had good feed and that part of it was a pound of American cheese and a quart of beer for each man.

We had a great many tons of these cheeses on board as freight. Some weighed one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds and were very ugly things to handle. The sailors discharged the cargo and hove the sling loads up by a winch at the mainmast. If very heavy we took the load to the capstan; and while we were heaving away, at eleven in the morning, the sailors struck up "Roll and go for that white pitcher, roll and go," and the steward would come up with a great pitcher filled with rum, and give each of us a drink. The same thing was repeated at four in the afternoon. This was varied when we were taking in cargo, which consisted of a great deal of railroad

iron and we had to pass it in from a lighter alongside and then down the hold. It was terribly hard work, and instead of the rum, a quart of beer from the tap room was brought to each one at eleven in the morning and four in the afternoon. I do not think we could have held out without it. This was the second time I had as hard work as I could stand; the first was in China, handling pig lead all night.

I had been in London a week without trying to see my sisters. I did not know where to find them. One Friday afternoon I was in the forward house cleaning paint brushes, when the Captain came along and just behind him Mr. John Hillard, my brother-in-law. I was glad to see him and he told me to make myself clean if I could, and go home with him. The Captain said I could go and stay until Monday morning. I immediately proceeded to wash and put on my best clothes. Now I had what I thought was a stunning suit of clothes, namely, a short blue jacket and trousers of blue cloth made in regular sailor style (tight around the hips, small at the knee and wide enough at the bottom to cover my boot from heel to toe), with a white shirt having a rolling collar, a big black neck handkerchief and a blue navy cap. I thought I was handsome as a picture.

Well, we started, and after a long time in an omnibus we reached the street called Marylebone Lane, and got out and walked a block or two, when we found the house. I was greeted most affectionately by my two sisters and I was happy enough to be with them. At dinner time I think I astonished them all with my appetite. However, the next day my sister Harriet, that is, Mrs. Hillard, took me to walk in one of the parks, and when we got back she said "Charley, I cannot go to walk with you in



that dress, every one was staring at us. You are about John's size, I will get a suit of his clothes for you to wear while you are here." Well, the next morning I found a full suit of clothes in my room. They were not a *full* suit by any means, for the fashion was to wear trousers tight all the way down the legs. Everything fitted well enough, but I felt very uncomfortable, though Mr. Hillard and my sisters said they were lovely and I looked fine in them. We went to walk and I expected every minute to hear them rip; and when we got home I told my sister I could not go to walk in those togs, for every one was looking at me. And I did not go again; I preferred to stay in the house. The ship was in London for over four weeks and I took the liberty to leave every Friday morning and stay till Monday with my sisters. They took me to the British Museum and to the Tower of London and through the different parks. I saw the Queen and Prince Albert, but had no conversation with them.

At last the ship was ready for sea and I bade my sisters good-bye. The weather was getting very cold, with heavy fogs every day, so I drew a month's wages and bought some heavy underwear, for it was now late in November and it would be well on in December before we reached home. We began to realize the toughness of a voyage westward as soon as we left the mouth of the Thames. Strong westerly gales met us and for fifteen days we were beating in the English Channel before we left Land's End astern. We hardly had a whole watch below during that time. It was "All hands shorten sail," or "All hands tack ship," or "Make sail," and we were wet to the skin most of the time. Our clothes were all wet and we would take them off, wring them out and put on others that were less wet. After leaving the Channel we took an easterly

wind, and we had a short passage to Fire Island, where we took a pilot. We were going along finely, when all hands were called to shorten sail; and in a short time the wind came out from the northwest. We lost most of our sails, and were driven off into the Gulf Stream, and one week afterward, again off Fire Island, we hailed the same pilot boat from which we had taken our pilot before. This time we managed to make Sandy Hook and a steam tug took us to the wharf at New York. I was very glad to get ashore, for it is very hard to keep warm at sea in freezing weather, especially when aloft, with the sails half frozen and your hands so stiff that you can hardly hold on. There is no fun in it.

Soon after I left home for London my brother William came home from China with Captain Nat Palmer, in the ship *Paul Jones*. During the voyage Captain Palmer had had a model of a clipper ship made and my brother took him to my brother Abbot and persuaded him to have a ship built after the model. It was to be built like a man-of-war, with solid bulwarks and pierced for sixteen guns—eight on a side, the intention being to sell her to the Chinese. She was to be very fast. This vessel, when I returned from London, was being built at Bell & Brown's ship-yard.

After being in New York for a day or two I went down to see how much wages were coming to me. I knew there was but very little, for I had had two months' advance and another month's pay in London, and the voyage only lasted about two weeks over three months. Yet I was hardly prepared for the statement handed me, which brought me in debt to the ship for over eleven dollars. That Captain who was so pleased to let me go and see my sisters, was pleased to charge me one dollar



and fifty cents for every day I was absent, Sunday and all, to pay for a man in my place. I was getting along famously—I had earned in fourteen months the enormous sum of forty-three dollars. However, I had a good home to go to, and my father gave me a fine suit of shore clothes and I had all the money I wanted from my brothers, while on shore. But after being ashore four weeks I longed for the sea again and about the middle of January I shipped on board the *Courier*, Captain Wolfe, for Rio Janeiro, with the promise of a third mate's berth on the *Houqua*. That was the name of a Chinese merchant, a great friend of my brothers and of all Americans, and the new ship was to be named for him.

Pardon Taylor, my most intimate friend and companion for many years, was so lonesome that he decided to go to sea with me. I shipped as ordinary seaman and Taylor shipped as boy. The *Courier* was a small ship of about three hundred and fifty tons, very fast, and a beautiful sea boat, but after being on board the *Toronto* it seemed child's play to handle her royal and topgallant sails. She also carried skysails and royal studding-sails. Captain Wolfe was a very kind and pleasant man. He had good feed, and "watch and watch," with a very respectable crew of twelve men, four ordinary seamen and four boys, cook and steward and two mates, carpenter and sailmaker.

We left Sandy Hook with cold weather and a fresh westerly wind which, the second day out, increased to a heavy gale with a snowstorm. The ship under three close-reefed topsails and reefed foresail ran before it, and she did beautifully, and we soon ran across the Gulf Stream and had good weather. My friend Taylor had a hard time of it; he was fearfully seasick and I was afraid he would not live. The Captain was very kind and took

him into the cabin, but he never got over it till we arrived in Rio Janeiro, when he went to work and worked hard; but as soon as he got to sea again he was taken as sick as ever, and on arriving in New York he was more dead than alive. He afterward went to New Orleans to enter his father's store. He went by sea and came near dying, so that the doctors told him he must never try it again; and he never did. This was one of the worst cases of seasickness I ever heard of in all my sea going.

We had a very short passage of thirty-eight days to Rio Janeiro, and almost as soon as we anchored and as soon as the ship was entered in the Custom-house, we went to work discharging our cargo of some nine thousand barrels of flour. The crew had to do the most of the work. To show the work we did, I will say that in eleven days we discharged nine thousand barrels of flour and took in some ten thousand sacks of coffee. Negroes took the coffee in and passed it down the hold. In the daytime they lightered the coffee from shore and we worked all night storing it away. This was my third experience of tough, hard work. The thermometer was over 100° in the hold, and we had to work without any clothes, passing or sliding the heavy bags along greased planks to the ends of the ship. It became easier as the ship filled up, but it was fearfully hard work and glad enough we were when the loading was completed and we were given a day on shore. Some four or five of us had quite an experience. We had been on shore during the day and evening, and had become somewhat noisy in a saloon, when some gendarmes came and took us on board a Brazilian receiving-ship, where we spent the rest of the night and were offered good terms to enlist in the Brazilian navy. But we sent word to the American Consul how we had been

entrapped, and very soon the Consul and Captain Wolfe came on board with our Protections, and took us on board the *Courier*. In those days every American, before he went to sea, had to go to the Custom-house and get a Protection from the United States Government. Before I shipped in the *Horatio* I had been duly measured, and stood five feet eleven and a half inches in my stockings, and that measurement with the color of the eyes and hair (and any distinguishing mark), was placed in this document. When I shipped it was given to the Captain of the ship to take care of and it was lucky I had kept track of it.

The next day we got under weigh and proceeded to sea. I only remember one incident in regard to the voyage home, and that occurred in the North Atlantic just after crossing the line. It was quite calm, but there was considerable swell on. Two of us were sent over the bows on a plank to scrape the paint off near the hawse pipe. To keep the stage close to the bows we had a line made fast to it and passed through the hawse pipe. We had been at work for some time when the breeze freshened and we began to get very near to the water, and at last the mate called us in. The ship was diving deeper every minute, but to get the stage in, the rope that held it had to be cast off. So I went over the bows to cast it off, when just as I had cast it clear, the ship gave a pitch and went bows under, washing me clear of the stage and so high up that I caught the back rope to the martingale and saved myself from going overboard altogether. In the mean time, the man on the bows sang out "Man overboard," and went aft with the rest to square the main yard to heave the ship to, but I was soon on the forecastle and made myself known before anything was done. I had a good

soaking, but it was warm weather and I did not mind that. However, it was a narrow escape and the mate and Captain congratulated me.

We had a longer passage home, of some forty-eight days. Light winds and calms and a heavily laden ship delayed us. The voyage was one of the pleasantest I ever made.

On my arrival I found the *Houqua* had been launched, and was being fitted for sea at Brown & Bell's ship-yard. I remained a few weeks at liberty; when my brother told me I was to go as third officer of the *Houqua* and wished me to go on duty at once. There was a very smart fellow on board the *Courier* with me and he wanted to go in the same ship; so I got him a berth as ordinary seaman, and we both went up and reported to the chief mate in charge. The ship was taking in pig lead, as all ships carried that in the lower hold. The mate set us to work taking it in, and we worked all day at it, much to my disgust. It was nearly seven o'clock when I got home, and I was in a very bad humor, and told my brother that I "did not care for a third mate's berth if I had got to work as a stevedore while in port. I would rather go as seaman and join the ship when she went to sea, and have a good time while on shore." After I told him what I had been set to work at, he said there must be some mistake and he would see Captain Palmer about it. I would not go to the ship the next day but I went to the office and met Captain Palmer and he made it all right. Captain N. B. Palmer was a rough old sailor. He was determined to see me get along, and helped me more than any other man to know my duty as an officer and to fit me for a master, so I went to my duty again and in a few days the mate who had set me to work was discharged and a new one took his place.

The new mate, or chief officer, was a very different sort of man from the first one, who was a very tall, large man weighing over two hundred pounds. Thomas Hunt, who took his place, was a very short, stout man and was cross-eyed; you could not tell where he was looking. He said he was "born in the middle of the week, looking both ways for Sunday." He was every inch a sailor, a strict disciplinarian and yet full of fun and very kind to the men as long as they did their duty; and men who know their duty will always do it cheerfully if they are treated like men. In a short time the ship was finished as far as the ship-yard was concerned, and towed down to Peck Slip to take in a cargo for China. Times had changed in the short interval since my coming home in the *Horatio*. Then the ships went out with almost no cargo but lead and coal, and now our ship was loaded with pig lead, lumber, cotton sheetings and naval stores, pitch, tar and turpentine. She was full, so there was no between-decks for the sailmaker, carpenter and boys. The boys had to go in the forecastle with the men, and a house over the main hatch was fitted up for the third mate, carpenter and sailmaker. It was a good sized room and very comfortable. I have no data to tell when we sailed; I only remember that Captain N. B. Palmer had no superstition as to Friday's being a bad day to sail, though at that time sailors objected to going to sea on Friday and many merchants were superstitious enough to wait for Saturday and even Sunday before sending their ships to sea.

The *Houqua* was launched on Friday, was towed down town on Friday, went to sea on Friday and arrived in Hong Kong on Friday, but she was a very lucky ship for four years at any rate, and whether these coincidences

had anything to do with her subsequent bad luck some years after, I cannot say. Captain N. B. Palmer was Captain, Thomas Hunt chief mate, William Gardner of Boston second mate and I third mate. We had quite a number of passengers, but I remember only three who were prominent:—a Mr. Goldsmith, a Mr. Squires and Frank Hillard, a younger brother of Mr. John Hillard, my brother-in-law. He was a very nice young man and wrote very good poetry.

We had a good send-off by our family and a large number of friends, who went down the bay with us. After getting to sea, our anchors stowed and our sails set, the usual routine was gone through for choosing watches. The Captain said but little, but Mr. Hunt had something to say to his watch. As I have said, he was cross-eyed, and when he told the men to look him straight in the eye they could not help laughing, and he said, "All I want to tell you is, not to try and skulk behind the foremast, for I can see right around it. Now go below the watch."

I was in the mate's watch and I was glad I was, for in the night-watches Mr. Hunt would tell me everything I was to set the men to work at the next day, and he instructed me in all sorts of seamanship, from turning in a dead-eye to heaving a ship down. This latter information came in handy many years after and was of great service to me. As third mate I was really nothing but an able seaman; of course I bossed the jobs, but I had to help do the work the same as any seaman, and I learned more during my voyage as third mate than I had ever known before. Besides teaching me seamanship, Mr. Hunt, with the Captain's knowledge, had me take my quadrant and take the sun at noon and work up the latitude by observation, and find the latitude and longitude



by dead reckoning. The Captain is the only one who finds the longitude by the chronometer. The mate keeps the dead reckoning and compares it with the Captain's observations, sometimes every day—sometimes no oftener than once a week—it depends very much how the Captain and mate work together. Captain Palmer and Mr. Hunt got along splendidly and of course everything went off happily.

In my watch below, the passengers used to come into the "house on deck," as it was called, and we would have a good smoke and spin yarns and have a good time generally.

The ship made a fine passage of seventy-two days to Anjer, where we laid in a stock of chickens, turtles, yams, bananas, oranges and mangosteens. Captain Palmer was a believer in good feed, not alone for the cabin; he believed in giving the sailors the very best of salt beef and pork and plenty of it; and everything else they had to eat was of the very best. There was no beef or pork thrown overboard from that ship. Here we filled our casks with fresh water brought by natives. After doing this we got under weigh and proceeded up the China Sea and sailed into Hong Kong, eighty-four days from New York—a splendid passage.

We had been in Hong Kong but a few days when we started for Whampoa. After mooring ship the mate ordered the quarter boat, which was styled the Captain's gig, as it was only used for him. As the boys had had no boating to do, I was ordered to take four of the ordinary seamen to man the boat and to go myself to look after them and to steer the boat. It was a great deal easier for me than when I was there before and had to do the rowing. We left the Captain in Canton and pulled

back to the ship and that was about the last of my boating.

Captain Palmer was very fond of his ship and would rather live on board at Whampoa and have company, than stay in Canton. Besides there was a great change in the Captain's duties. When Captain Howland was there he had much to do with the disposing of the cargo and buying the return cargo, but now the American houses, Russell & Co., Heard & Co. and Wetmore & Co. transacted all the business, and the Captain was only really wanted when the bills of lading were to be signed. He had a room on shore assigned to him and was welcome to come and stay as long as he liked, and when he did go he had a fast sampan, or Chinese boat, to take him up and bring him back.

While the *Houqua* was building, a beautiful model of the ship was made at the yard to be presented to Houqua, the merchant for whom the ship was named. My brothers William and Edward were with Russell & Co. and Captain Palmer took me with him when he went to present the model to Houqua. Some three or four others, of the house of Russell & Co., went with us to Houqua's residence opposite Canton and we were all received very cordially. After the presentation was over we were shown over his beautiful gardens and then had an elaborate lunch, some of it very good indeed, though some did not please my fancy. The ship was built to sell to the Chinese and Houqua was to sell her, but she was too small to suit the Government and so we had to load her and take her back to New York again.

Soon after we arrived in Whampoa, the *Montauk* arrived. She was the second clipper built, and a very beautiful ship too, just about the size of the *Houqua*,



and it was hard to tell which was the handsomer. Captain McMichaels commanded her. He was a jolly old fellow and very fond of using big words. One day he had a large party from Canton to dine with him; it was shortly after canned oysters, clams and vegetables came into use, and he had some green peas and other vegetables on the table. During the dinner, they being much praised, Captain McMichaels said, "Yes, gentlemen, those vegetables were put up in tin cans and *diametrically* sealed." Every one knew the Captain meant *hermetically* sealed, but they had to laugh.

All the ships had to lie a long time in port, and after the rigging was overhauled and tarred down and all was painted aloft, the hull was painted inside and out, the deck holystoned as white as snow, and then everything was kept in splendid order. They said that Captain McMichaels kept his decks so white that any one coming on board was followed by a boy with a wet swab to wipe up any foot-prints.

This puts me in mind of a nice little time we once had on the *Houqua*, one Saturday afternoon, late, when we had just finished holystoning the decks and the paint on the bulwarks was hardly dry. The second mate had a fifty pound keg of black paint in the paint locker on one side of the bowsprit, under the topgallant forecastle. Unfortunately the sailors owned a large Borneo monkey or baboon, and he had been made fast on the bowsprit within reach of the paint. Like a monkey, always full of mischief, he upset the bucket of paint, which ran down the seuppers as far as the mainmast over the clean white deck. The second mate, as soon as it was found out, caught the monkey and swabbed the paint up with him till he would hold no more, and then threw him overboard,

but this made bad worse, for the monkey caught the side ladder hanging over by the main rigging and came up, and before any one could stop him, ran the whole length of the bulwarks, leaving the black paint all over the fresh straw-colored paint, and making an awful mess. The man who owned him caught him and hurried him into the forecastle, but it was "All hands to clean ship"; for the decks had to be scraped and wiped off and then painted again, for Sunday must find the ship in perfect order. As for the monkey, the men turned to and shaved him clean and he was the worst looking animal that was ever seen. The second mate was as mad a man as could be for a time, but he soon got over it after the ship was to rights again, and he never molested the monkey, who was a great pet.

In connection with the *Montauk* I must mention a dream I had and its remarkable fulfilment. It was on our way up the China Sea. I dreamed that we were bound home and running a race with the *Montauk*. The second mate was sick and laid up in his room and I had to stand his watch. At four o'clock in the morning I came on deck to relieve the mate, Mr. Hunt. There was very little wind and he told me that I must look out, as squalls came up with little warning. Soon after he left the deck the wind hauled ahead and I braced the yards forward. I had no sooner got the yards trimmed than I had to brace again, and then again for the third time. The wind was still very light, but before we had finished bracing the main yards—I had the main brace in my hand, slacking away—I heard the wind whistling and I sung out, "Let go the skysail and royal halyards." At that minute the Captain and mate rushed out of the cabin and some one sung out that the main-topgallant mast was carried away. I said,

"It is not the main-topgallant mast; it can't be." As soon as I said it, I dropped the main brace and could not say another word.

The next day I told the second mate, the steward, carpenter and sailmaker of my dream and thought no more of it. Four or five months after this we were on our way home and we were running a race with the *Montauk*, and the second mate was laid up and I was standing his watch, and at four o'clock in the morning I relieved him. The weather was hazy, the wind light, and I braced the yards three times; the third time a squall struck the ship. I sung out, "Let go the skysail and royal halyards." The Captain and Mr. Hunt rushed on deck, and some one sang out that the main-topgallant mast was gone, and I said, "It is not the main-topgallant mast; it can't be," and I dropped the rope in my hand and could not say another word, for then I remembered my dream. I was soon brought to my senses, however, by the mate's sending me aloft with the men to send down the wreck. I had to go down to the second mate's room to get some spun yarn and he said, "Well, Low, your dream has come true." All to whom I had told it remembered it, and the mate told the Captain, and so I got off very easy, as it was bound to be and no one could have hindered it. The accident occurred in or near the place where I had had the dream. How can any one account for such a dream? I had forgotten it completely, so it was of no use as a warning and did not save the spar. However, dreams of all kinds are a puzzle. Later on I shall tell of a dream that probably saved the ship I was then in and the lives of all on board.

The cargo all being on board, we got under weigh and proceeded down the river. As usual, a number of ships

sent a boat's crew on board to help us, and fifteen or twenty sampans towed us across the second bar, where we made sail and sent off the boats. We had for passengers my brother William, Mr. Dow, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Battelle and Mr. Burdett. Mr. Dow, on a voyage from India, had been sunstruck and his mind was affected. The other passengers were a jolly set of fellows and kept up a lively pace all the way home. They had plenty of liquor on board and almost every evening they would get on deck and would sing songs and spin yarns till ten o'clock, when they had to retire, for no lights were allowed after that. Captain Palmer would always absent himself till they got through their fun, but he never objected, but let them enjoy themselves.

We had a very pleasant passage, stopping at St. Helena for a short time for water and sheep and vegetables. Our carpenter wanted to get a brick from Napoleon's grave, and a negro boatman told him he would fetch him one for a dollar, which he gave to him. In about half an hour a brick was brought, probably the first one the negro found on shore, for it takes at least four hours to go to Longwood and of course the guard would not have let him have one from there. I told the carpenter he could get just as good a brick in New York that would answer the purpose as well, but the old fellow was satisfied and could tell his friends with a better conscience that it was a veritable brick from Napoleon's last resting place.

This voyage throughout had been a school for me in navigation and seamanship. The mate had done all he could to put me forward. As I was only a seaman in reality I worked with the men, and I was on good terms with them. They were all good sailors; and I could now turn in a dead-eye and clap on a seizing as well as most

of them, and besides, I was getting great confidence in myself in regard to taking care of the ship, as I kept the second mate's watch for more than six weeks.

From St. Helena we made good time up to Barnegat, where we took a pilot the last of March. It was Sunday morning and with a light breeze we were going up towards the Hook. Just after breakfast Mr. Battelle came on deck all dressed up in his best clothes, new silk hat and white kid gloves. The second mate said, "Hallo! Where you going to?" Battelle said he was going to church if the ship got to New York in time. But he was slightly mistaken, for the pilot began to give orders to shorten sail, and the second mate told Mr. Battelle that if he saw New York in a week, he would be lucky, as a nor'wester was coming out. And sure enough we were soon under close-reefed topsails with a gale blowing right in our teeth. Poor Battelle cursed the second mate and wished *he* might meet with a nor'wester every time he came home; and then he went below and we did not see him again till we got to Sandy Hook three days afterwards. This was the second time I had been blown off to sea when it seemed that a few hours would have put us into port in safety.

During the voyage this Battelle had played many tricks upon the simple-minded Mr. Dow, who had not said a word, but when we got off Staten Island, waiting for the Custom-house officer, (I was in the cabin with two men, getting out the trunks, and Captain Palmer was also there with all the passengers) Mr. Dow called to Mr. Battelle and told him he was a great scoundrel and that he must get down on his knees and beg his pardon for all the tricks he had played upon him, or else go ashore and fight with pistols. He said he had taken everything quietly during the voyage, so as not to have any trouble, but now he was

going to have satisfaction. Poor Battelle was frightened and got down on his knees and asked pardon; said he had meant nothing, but wanted a little fun. Mr. Battelle and Mr. Dow were two very large men. It was a great surprise to see Mr. Battelle show the white feather. He was supposed to be a great pugilist, but he fell in every one's estimation and Captain Palmer would not have anything to say to him. Poor Mr. Dow had to go to an insane asylum and at the age of eighty-two was still there, some fifty years after he came home. We made the passage home in something under ninety days and beat the *Montauk*.

I was now made second mate, with Mr. Hunt as chief mate and Captain Alexander Palmer as captain. Captain Nat stayed on shore to superintend the building of a new clipper to be called the *Samuel Russell*, and to be twice as large as the *Houqua*. We left New York about the middle of May for China, with a cargo of cotton goods and lumber, but no passengers. Nothing unusual occurred. I got along very well as second mate, but towards the end of the voyage the Captain got dissatisfied with Mr. Hunt. The trouble began in the Indian Ocean. When we left New York it looked as though the United States would have war with England. One day as we were running our easting down we saw a ship ahead at eight o'clock in the morning. It was a fine day and Mr. Hunt was going to give a salute at noontime. For some reason we had all our eight ports triced up, though we only had two nine pounders. These were run out the bow ports and loaded. A few minutes before twelve o'clock we were within a half mile of the stranger, who hoisted English colors. At twelve we hauled up our mainsail and fired one of the guns and ran up our colors. We were nearly alongside



of the Englishman who was hauling in his studding-sails and shortening sail as fast as he could, evidently thinking there was war between the two countries and intending to surrender. When the captain spoke him and told him we were the American ship *Houqua* from New York, bound to China, a merchant ship like himself, he was mad as a hornet and would have nothing to say to us, but gave orders to make sail again. We fired twelve guns, and Mr. Hunt, to show how smart we were, gave orders to haul aboard the main tack and aft sheet at the same time, and let go all the gear at once. This the Captain laid up against him as an attempt to lose the sail, although he ought to have known there was no danger, as the breeze was light and the men had the sail set in a very short time. But Captain Palmer tended to be suspicious and could not bear to see two or three men talking together; he was apt to imagine they were talking against him. It was a great mistake, for he was a perfect gentleman and a first-rate sailor, and the best of navigators. He was the only captain I sailed with, who took lunar observations and taught me how to work them up.

Everything went on smoothly, however, till just before reaching Anjer. I wished to send a letter home from there and one morning when I had my watch below, I went into the cabin and asked the Captain to let me have two or three sheets of letter paper, as I had none. Of course I took off my hat when I went in, as in duty bound. The Captain said nothing to me at the time, but a few days after, Mr. Hunt called me and wanted to know what I had been doing. He said the Captain had been finding a great deal of fault, saying that I went into the cabin for writing paper and took off my hat, just as though I had no right to go in. I laughed at the idea and afterwards

I spoke to the Captain and told him what Mr. Hunt had said. I told him I had been brought up to show respect to my superiors, and should feel as though I were very impertinent to keep my hat on when going into the cabin. He made some comment on Mr. Hunt's behavior, which I do not recall. Mr. Hunt was a jolly fellow and apt to make too free with such a man as Captain Alexander Palmer, though Captain Nat Palmer rather enjoyed his wit and stories.

Well, things went on till we got to China and the cargo was all discharged. Then Mr. Hunt came to me and told me that he was going to leave the ship; that the Captain had said as much as that he had better leave, and he would not stay where he was not wanted. I told him if he left I would leave too, but he told me not to do it, but to stay by the ship, though not to go second mate under any mate who could be had in China. My brother Edward was in Russell & Co.'s, and he also told me not to leave the ship, so I stayed. A few days after, when the men were at dinner, the Captain called me below and asked me how I liked the change. I asked him what change? and he said Mr. Hunt's leaving. I informed him that I was very sorry; that Mr. Hunt was thought very much of at home and also that I should not go as second mate under any man picked up in China. He asked me if I felt competent to go as mate? I told him that matter was for him to judge. He wanted to know if I was well up in navigation, as mates had to be able to navigate the ship if anything happened to the Captain. I told him I was well able to find the position of the ship by observation, and thought I could take the ship to any port of the world. "If that is so," he said, "I am confident that your seamanship is good enough; you are first mate from to-day; and



whom shall we get for second mate?" I told him I would make inquiries, and before the next day I found a first-rate man. Mr. Hunt ran foul of him and told me of him, and Captain Palmer engaged him. I have forgotten his name, but he was A No. 1. Here I was after one voyage as third mate, and only about four months as second mate, promoted to a chief mate's berth on one of the finest ships afloat; and I was only a little over twenty years of age. I was determined that I would keep the position, if hard work and a strict attention to my duties would do it.

Shortly after this we took in a load of cotton goods and sailed for Shanghai. The navigation of the Yang-tse River to Woosung was very different, as the river had not been well surveyed as yet, the port of Shanghai having been opened to foreigners only a short time. We met with no trouble, and arrived safely and discharged our cargo, and took in a cargo of tea. As it was not packed in such packages as they sent from Canton, we were to go back to Whampoa and unload, and fill up with Canton-packed teas. We had quite a large number of passengers, most of them to go to Chusan, an island in the archipelago, some distance to the southeast of the mouth of the Yang-tse River. We dropped down the river to Woosung all right, but where the river intersects the Yang-tse there were a number of junks assembled. The Captain was on the quarter deck, while I was stationed on the forecastle. I had the quarter boat under the bows, to run lines if necessary to haul the ship one way or another. All at once I heard the cry of "The Captain is overboard!" I immediately ordered the boat to go to the stern, and the men made such good time that they reached the Captain before he sank the second time. He had been trying to

pry off a junk's anchor stock which was foul of our davits, when the handspike slipped and let him fall overboard. He had a bad fall and was very considerably shaken up and was quite sick; there was a doctor on board who said he must remain in bed. He called me to him and told me I must take charge of the ship for the present and take her to Chusan. He gave me directions and showed me the chart and how I was to proceed, warning me to be very careful as the tides were very rapid and needed close watching. The pilot had charge of the ship just then and after clearing the junks we proceeded down the river. The tide turning about six P.M. we came to an anchor for the night, giving me a chance to study the situation, and I felt confident that I could navigate the ship safely. The captain gave me all the advice he could, and at six A.M. we got under way and proceeded on our course.

I discharged the pilot and left the river. I soon found the current was running nearly eight miles an hour, partly in my favor, but I had to haul up some four points more to the eastward. I made the island in good time and came to anchor all right, much to the Captain's delight and mine, too. We moored ship with forty-five fathoms on one anchor and thirty fathoms on the other. We lay there twenty-four hours, discharged our passengers and the Captain being better, started to get under weigh, but we had a job before us. The ship had been turning round and round and had wound the cables up as far as we could see. Generally in mooring to remain any time we have a mooring shackle, which turns round every time the ship does; and we have both chains shackled to it, and then cast off one chain and hold with a single cable attached to the upper part of the shackle. It was a long job and a hard

one, as we had to lash the two chains together and with a boat take in one chain and haul it round and round, taking the turns out, then shackle it again and heave in by the windlass till we got more of the chain above water, and then proceed as before. It took us most of the day to clear hawse, and it was nearly dark before we got under weigh for Hong Kong. We arrived at Hong Kong and then proceeded up the river to Whampoa, where we discharged the Shanghai tea to be repacked, Canton fashion.

About a month later we took in our cargo for New York and I recall nothing to relate on the voyage home. I appeared to please the Captain, and we had no trouble with the men. Captain Palmer took pleasure in teaching me to work lunars, and he took them very often; he was well up in the higher branches of navigation and I learned very much from him. While I was with him he seemed very feeble and not long for this life, but he outlived both of his brothers and reached the advanced age of ninety-two years. After arriving in New York he left the ship, and Captain Nat Palmer took command. Of course I was a little uncertain whether I should be retained as chief mate, but Captain Nat soon assured me that I was to go with him in that capacity.

I had been at home but four weeks when, the ship being loaded, we left again for China, Captain Palmer taking his wife and a niece of his, Miss Fanning. She was a very pleasant girl and I was very glad to have her company in the first watch, from eight to ten P.M., a pleasure which she often gave me in fine weather.

Nothing unusual happened; everything went off very well. Captain Palmer evidently intended that I should be master of the ship as soon as possible, for he made me take observations of the sun for longitude by the chronometer,

and mark out the ship's position on the chart, and give the course the ship should be sailed, and sometimes he would take no observation himself but work out mine. Now the captain is the one who puts the ship about, but very often when it had to be done Captain Nat would say, "Mr. Low, put the ship about," and then he would go below till it was done. In fact he left me sole master of the deck and I had to make sail or take it in without calling him. He was very passionate. In calm weather he would come on deck, with an old white beaver hat on, take it off and stamp on it and "damn" the calm and everything else, but he never abused the men.

When running down our easting one day we were under close-reefed topsails and foresail, and the ship was rolling fearfully. About seven P.M. I had the watch and the Captain put his head out of the cabin scuttle and asked me how the weather was. I told him it was more moderate just then, but I thought it would blow again at eight o'clock. He then said, "Mr. Low, shake the reefs out of the main topsail; set the main-topgallant sail and main-royal and let her roll over ship shape and Bristol fashion, with all her canvas on her!" and then darted below. At eight P.M., as I expected, it began to blow hard again and the Captain put his head out of the scuttle and called out, "Mr. Low, take in the main-royal, the main-topgallant sail and close reef the main-topsail, and let her roll over and be damned to her!" And down he went again. It was very wet and very cold on deck and he preferred the cabin, but if it was necessary he could stand any fatigue and exposure, and I was quite sure his object in retiring was to teach me confidence in myself, and also to give me experience. In fact, as far as carrying on the work of the ship and sailing her was concerned, I was the Captain.

We had a very pleasant voyage and a good one, stopping at Anjer and going up the China Sea to Hong Kong and then to Whampoa to load for New York. We had to wait some two or three months before securing a cargo, and Captain Palmer had one of the quarter boats fitted with sails and would spend a good deal of his time sailing around with his wife and Miss Fanning, but sometimes he would go to Canton for a week and leave me to take his wife and niece out for a sail, which I enjoyed very much. As I was chief mate I had no work to attend to after the cargo was out. I gave my orders to the second mate and he carried on the work, and as I always took my meals with the Captain, no matter how much company he had, I was always dressed neatly and was as much of a gentleman as the Captain. My brother Edward was a partner in the house of Russell & Co., and Saturday afternoons he would come down to the ship and stay over Sunday, sometimes bringing two or three or more young men with him, and we would have a good time together; in fact there was hardly a day without company.

We at last began to take in teas, and my time had come to go to work, as I had to take account of all the chests that came on board, and it required a sharp lookout to see that the Chinese boatmen did not cheat. Every chest that came through the port had a tally stick about a foot long stuck in the rattans; this was taken out by the man near the port, and when he had received ten of them he would sing out "Tally!" and I would mark it down. The Chinese boatmen would try and stick two bamboos in one chest, but with a smart young man to look out there was not much danger, though he had to keep his eyes open.

After the ship was loaded the Captain went to Canton

to sign the bills of lading, and while he was gone the running rigging was rove, sails bent and the ship got ready for sea; and as soon as the Captain came back we were ready to unmoor and sail for home.

As on the voyage out so it was going home. The Captain left the working of the ship to me; and I also had opportunities to work the sights for longitude by chronometer; in fact I was well able to take command, though I was not to be Captain just yet, nor did I expect to be.

We arrived in New York late in March, had quite a blow off the coast, and came near losing some of our sails. Captain Nat had a great way of taking command of a ship when she was new and everything was in good shape, and so he sailed her at little expense. Then he would turn her over to some other Captain who would be obliged to buy a lot of running rigging and new sails and thus run up a number of big bills. It was now the *Houqua's* third voyage and hardly anything had been replaced since the first one; the ropes were giving out and as I said, we came near losing our sails from the ropes' parting. The Captain said nothing, but when we were preparing for another voyage and Captain Nat told me that his brother Theodore would take charge, I resolved to tell him how the rigging was worn out and I did. He said he knew his brother well, and that he would have everything good if he was going to take command. I gave him a list of the new ropes wanted and he bought them. The day the riggers were bending sails, most of the new rope that was being rove was on the mainsail and topsail right in the gangway, and it made a big show. Captain Theodore was standing near when Captain Nat put in an appearance, and as soon as he saw the new rope he began to swear and said they would have to sell the ship to pay



expenses, and he ordered the ropes to be unrove and the old ones put in their places. But I stepped in and told Captain Nat that he knew that the ropes were not fit to haul the sails up with, and that we came near losing the mainsail and main-topsail just before coming in. He calmed down and told his brother to change them as soon as he got into fine weather; but his brother had an ugly temper and they had a fight about expenses almost every day till he went to sea.

Captain Theodore Palmer was much younger than his brothers and was a harder man to get along with. He had been in the Liverpool packets most of his life and had had hard men to deal with and he looked upon sailors as mere brutes, to be dealt with as such. But we had a good crew, as most "Indiamen" had in those days and he realized that they were superior and better than the "hoosiers" he had been used to, and improved in his treatment very much.

I got along with him very well and he seemed very much pleased with my work as chief mate. When he first saw me he supposed I knew little or nothing, but that I had been advanced by favor of his brother, and that he would have to be master and mate too. But he soon found out that I wanted no favors, and would take no advantage of my relationship to the owners. This pleased him very much and he became quite sociable with me, and asked me many questions about the trade winds and weather during the trip, for he had never been south of the line, and I helped him very much in making a short passage. There was nothing of interest in the voyage out. We made a good passage and after the usual waiting for a cargo filled up and sailed for home.

We had four or five passengers. One was Captain



Harding, an old opium skipper. He was a splendid specimen of a man, over six feet in height and stout in proportion. I think he weighed some two hundred and eighty pounds or more. He had a magnificent Newfoundland dog which would do almost anything his master told him to do. Then we had a missionary, the Rev. Mr. Doty, who was going home after having buried his third wife in Amoy. He had in charge a lovely boy of four or five years, George Pohlman, an orphan placed with Mr. Doty to bring up. He did not intend to spare the rod in doing it, for almost every night he gave the boy a thrashing, sometimes for what he had done, and sometimes for what he might do the next day, till one evening I went into the cabin and told the reverend gentleman that he must stop whipping that boy or I would thrash him every time I caught him at it. The voyage home was the same as most voyages, fine pleasant sailing most of the way. We put into St. Helena and the Captain and passengers went on shore and stayed all night. There were two or three whalers in port, and the mates came on board and stayed till after midnight spinning yarns. I came near being caught napping, for no one waked me up before six o'clock, when we should have been ready for getting under weigh. Fortunately the Captain slept late on shore and did not get off till eight A.M., when I had all sail set and was ready to heave up the anchor as soon as he made his appearance.

From St. Helena we had the usual pleasant weather till we were in latitude 25° north where we lost the northeast trades and were in the outside of a West Indian hurricane. The weather was very threatening and at eight P.M. we had reduced sail to three close-reefed topsails, sent down skysail and royal yards and made all ready, but there

was no wind. At ten P.M. there was a terrific thunder-and-lightning storm. I never saw the like of it before or since. It was so dark that I could not see the Captain who was close alongside of me. It began with a fierce flash of lightning right overhead, followed by a deafening thunder-clap on the port quarter; then a forked streak of lightning on the starboard quarter with another peal of thunder, and for two hours it continued without intermission, with torrents of rain but no wind. It was fearful, but after midnight it worked away to the westward, and in the morning the northeast trades came back and from that time on we made a good run to New York, reaching home about the middle of September.

As mate I had to stay by the ship till the cargo was all discharged, which took about fifteen days. My brother then told me that Captain Nat Palmer had advised my being in put command of the ship. Being just twenty-three years old I hesitated at accepting the offer, but Captain Palmer told me I was just as capable of being Master as I should be two years hence, and I accepted. I felt very proud of the position. I chose for my chief mate Mr. Stevens, a very capable man, a good sailor and navigator. He was an Englishman but had sailed from New York for a long time. I liked him very much. The steward was named *Essex* after the man of war of that name. He had been steward of the *Great Western*, the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic. He was lame in one arm but he was the best steward out of New York and had been in the *Houqua* for two voyages, and was ready to go with me in my first voyage as Master.

I had more time to myself now than I had had since I first went to sea and I enjoyed my stay on shore. I visited around in the family, dining out pretty much every

day. I was longing to get to sea again, and yet somewhat anxious, as the time arrived, to assume the whole responsibility of Master.

The time flew rapidly, and on the 4th of November we were towed down the bay. All my brothers and sisters, Captains Nat and Theodore Palmer and a large number of friends were on the tug-boat to give me a send off, and just five years from my first voyage as boy I was off as Captain of this beautiful little ship. I had a splendid crew, and my second mate, Mr Higgins, seemed very smart and active. My chief mate I had great confidence in, and as for myself, now I was afloat, I was perfectly confident that I should be fully able to give satisfaction to my employers.

The first three days we had light winds and pleasant weather. On the fourth day out the wind was fresh and stormy, but I left the deck with the mate about eleven o'clock. Soon after he came and called me and said it was blowing hard and that he wanted me on deck. I have never forgotten my feelings at that time. I had always had some one to call upon at such a time, and now I was the one called and the one to act. I was not long in answering his call and as soon as I got on deck I found it was necessary to shorten sail, and I told the mate to call all hands and reef the topsails. I put two reefs in and sent the men below. It was now my watch on deck and I carried the double-reefed topsails till daylight, when the gale increased and I had to close-reef, and for two days we had very heavy gales with furious squalls. We made good headway but did not get the northeast trades till we reached latitude  $21^{\circ}$  north. We carried them to  $5^{\circ}$  north and then took the southeast trades with only one day's calm, crossing the line after the very short

passage of twenty-three days from New York. The trades were light and we had pleasant weather. Seven days after crossing the line we made the Island of Trinidad at four o'clock in the afternoon. This was a great satisfaction and gave me great relief. It not only showed me that my chronometers were going well but that my observations were correct and that there was no trouble about my navigation. With variable winds we passed the meridian of the Cape of Good Hope in latitude  $4^{\circ}$  south and for a week we had furious gales; but nothing worthy of notice took place till the fifteenth day of January.

The ship was running before the wind; it was a beautiful night with full moon and not a cloud to be seen. I had been talking to the second mate and telling him I thought we had made the quickest passage on record thus far. We had every sail set, stunsails on both sides and all sail we could pack on the ship. At ten P.M. I went below, and before turning in I looked at the barometer and it stood at 29.80, the same as for some days. At two I was waked out of a sound sleep by a terrible dream. I dreamed the ship was going down head first, with a big sea rolling over her bows. I jumped from my berth in a reeking perspiration and went on deck, which was my custom when I woke up at any time of night. Before going up I looked at the barometer and it was the same as when I turned in. I found the mate in charge and asked him how the weather was, and he replied that it was about the same as when he relieved the deck at twelve o'clock. Feeling chilly I went below and I seemed to be led by an invisible something to look at the barometer. It had fallen two tenths! I had forgotten my dream, but I could not make out how there should be such a fall. I examined to it see if there was anything wrong about it

and came to the conclusion that I had not set it right. I put on my monkey jacket and went on deck again and found the wind increasing somewhat, and ordered all the port-studding-sails taken in and the jibs and spanker to be furled, and then went down again to look at the barometer and found it had fallen two tenths more. I then knew there was trouble brewing and jumped on deck, ordering all hands called to shorten sail and handed the royals and topgallant sails. The wind increasing as fast as we could clew up, haul down and furl, we close-reefed the topsails and furled the mainsail. At three A.M., barometer 28.90 and blowing heavy, we took in the fore and mizzen-topsail and furled them, and reefed the foresail and set it. At four A.M. we were scudding under a close-reefed main-topsail and reefed-foresail, wind blowing a furious gale. The sky was covered with dense masses of black, smoky clouds filled with thunder and lightning, and all the mast-heads and yard-arms had composants, or balls of electricity, resting upon them, as low down as the lower yards.

The stunsail booms were rigged in and made fast to the quarter of the yards. The ship at five A.M. was scudding at a fearful rate, and rolling. She first rolled the starboard topmast-stunsail booms under, on both the fore and main-yards, snapping them short off; she then rolled to port and snapped the port-booms off. The next roll she made took the starboard quarter boat from the davits. At six A.M. the wind suddenly shifted to south from southwest, blowing a hurricane and broaching the ship to, and heaving her down with her port leading trucks in the water. We hauled the foresail up and braced the main-yard up with the port braces. The foresail and main-topsail blew to pieces, and one by one every sail was blown from



## THE HOUQUA

“The ship was scudding at a fearful rate.”





the gaskets and reefs. The jib and flying-jib guys set up to the cat-head and the strain on the guys was so great as to snap the cat-head short off, and the jib-boom went overboard, breaking off at the bowsprit cap. The fore-and-main-topgallant masts soon followed, carrying with them the topmast-head. The mizzen-topgallant-mast bent nearly double and broke off just above the cap. The port quarter boat was lashed on deck having just been repaired. This was knocked to pieces and went overboard. All the ports, eight in number on the port side, were carried away and the monkey rail stove in fore and aft. It was impossible to hear yourself speak. My mate was within three feet of me, and with a speaking trumpet it was difficult to make him hear. It blew so hard we had to lie flat and hold on. At nine A.M. the wind lulled and the ship righted and fell off before the wind. Every sail had been blown from the gaskets and reefs, and there was not a square foot of canvas left upon the yards. The spanker was reefed and furled to the boom and it blew to pieces from there. The barometer now stood at 27.50. While the lull lasted we managed to clear away the wreck of the fore and main-topgallant-masts with the yards and rigging attached, and let them go overboard. At noon there was a furious gale from southeast. Shortly after noon the hurricane came on again with terrific violence and it was impossible to stand against it. At two P.M., as it was still increasing in violence, fearing to scud any longer we hove the ship to under bare poles, on the port tack, with her head to the south. The rails and ports were all whole on the starboard side and the wind was hauling against the sun, or from southwest to south and southeast to east. When we hove to, the lower masts and topmasts with their yards were all right, with the

wreck of the main-topgallant mast hanging to windward. At four P.M. the mates and sailors were lashed under the main rigging and I was standing just abaft holding on to the pin rail, when to windward I could see the spoondrift, a solid mass twenty or thirty feet high, coming down before the hurricane; and the most fearful gusts of wind hurled themselves upon us. It is impossible to describe the roaring, howling and shrieking of the wind. Never did I or could I imagine it. The stoutest and firmest man in the ship could not stand before any one of the ports, the spoondrift being driven through them with the force of a shot from a cannon. It struck the outside of the ship and formed an arch over her so that while we could see fore and aft, we could not see above the tops, and the air was so full of salt water we could hardly breathe. The ship stood against it for about ten minutes, when she was hove down on her beam ends. I tried to gain the weather rail and I caught it with my right hand, but the rail being wet and slippery, and the ship going over so quickly, my feet slipped from under me and I fell into the sea to leeward, without touching the ship. I rose to see the mizzen rigging just before me, but a big sea came over me and I went down where it was dark. I never expected to see the ship again. I said my last prayer, as I thought. Everything that I had done from my youth up came to my mind and I wondered how long my relatives would look for me and never hear from me; but my eyes were open and I saw a line before me and caught it and hauled myself up till my head struck the pin rail around the mizzen-mast, before my feet struck the deck. I immediately got on the weather side of it and motioned to the mate and men to cut the rigging of the mainmast. As they cut the lanyards the mainmast went, breaking off

about four feet above the deck. With the assistance of a man at the wheel I got to windward and cut the lanyards of the mizzen rigging, the mast going over about a foot above the deck, and the ship righted with her rail above the water. Before the masts were cut away, the rims of the tops were in the water and the deck perpendicular, and the ship was drawing as much water on her side as she did on her keel. If we had been two minutes later in cutting away the masts she would inevitably have foundered. The carpenter's house with all his tools and clothes, the galley with the caboose or cooking stove, with all the cooking utensils in the ship, went overboard without leaving a trace upon the rail. The fore-scuttle was carried away and the water poured down in a solid stream, carrying the bulkhead between-decks into the lower hold, with all the sailors' bunks, chests and bedding. The house over the long boat, with all the purchase and spare blocks and spare lines and all the live stock, pigs and fowls went overboard. The ship was so far over that the capstan unshipped and stuck in one of the ports to leeward, and that was about the only thing that was left on deck.

The cabin was half filled with water and my chronometers also were full of water and one of them stopped. My watch and sextant were also ruined; also my books and charts were soaked, and all table linen and my clothes were wet through. There was nothing belonging to me that was not drenched except six volumes of "Channing's Sermons" which I had not opened, and which were in a berth on the other side of the ship; they were *dry*.

When the main and mizzen-masts were cut away the lee rigging held them and they turned up under the weather quarter and were beating with great force against the ship, threatening to beat a hole in it. It was a great

relief when the rigging gave way and they drifted away from us. Until they left us we did nothing. The sounding rod was gone, so I ordered the mate to take two of the best men and go down forward and see how much water there was in the ship. They reported her half full. I immediately ordered both pumps rigged, and we went to work. In the meantime I had a small sail rigged up to the boat davits, and it blew so hard that this brought the ship to the wind and she lay very comfortably. I now went below for the first time since noon. I found the steward wiping off the paint work and he told me that he had gone into his room as he could do nothing on deck and did not want to be eaten up by sharks, for he supposed the ship would founder. I found in my room, which was just abaft the pantry and store room, a lot of stores which had washed from the store room, Indian meal, soap, and a quantity of other things. The Manila cabin boy had tried to get out of the skylight, and had cut his arms badly with breaking the glass; and two or three of my men had to be attended to who had received cuts and bruises, so I had my hands full for an hour or more. All hands kept the pumps going, and as fast as they were relieved they lay down on deck and went to sleep with the water washing over them, that came in through the open ports. About eleven P.M. the men came to me and wanted to know where the second mate was, saying they wanted him to take his share of the pumping. I went to his room and found him on his knees, praying. I told him to "Hustle out of that quick and go to the pumps! for God helped those who helped themselves." He was a badly scared man and wanted to know if the ship was going to the bottom. I told him we should know better when we got the water out of her. It was an awful night; the fore

yard, the lifts and the braces were gone, and the fore yard was cock-billed; the lower yard-arm striking the bulwarks and knocking a big hole in them. The fore topsail-yard hung by the tie, as it had lost the parrel, and when the ship rolled it went the full length of the tie to leeward and then came back with the force of a battering ram, carrying away the fore-topsail rigging and bruising the foremast-head badly. It was impossible to attend to all of these while we had, as we supposed, a sinking ship under us, and besides, it was blowing so that no one could put his head above the rail. The men had been on deck from two A.M. Saturday morning until Sunday morning at seven, with only a glass of cider occasionally and a biseuit. We had no water, for it had all washed from the deck and there was no going below.

After the pumps sucked, at seven A.M. on Sunday, and we found we had a tight ship under us, I sent all hands to get two or three hours' sleep.

On Monday, January seventeenth, we had fine weather and I sent fore-yard and fore-topsail yard on deck to be refitted, which was a tedious job, for all the tools we had left were a hatchet and a gouge found among the sailors' dunnage. As we had no cooking-stove and no water, while the carpenter was fitting the fore-yard the rest of the men broke out the fore hold and procured salt beef and pork and casks of bread, and a cask of coal which we hoisted on deck. The coal cask we cut in two and turned one half on its end and then covered it with a foot of sand. We rigged a tripod on top and with some tins from the cabin we made out to boil salt pork and beef and give the men a good mess.

Tuesday, the eighteenth, we sent the fore-yard and fore-topsail-yard aloft. On opening the after hatch we found

it so hot that we were threatened with spontaneous combustion, and we had to open all the hatches and take out many bales of cotton goods and put windsails down the hatches. Afterwards we sent the foresail up and set it, also the fore-topsail.

Wednesday was very pleasant and we got ready and shipped a main-topmast for a jury mizzen-mast, on which we set a spanker and a cross-jack made of a reefed mizzen-topsail. We also sent up a short fore-topgallant-mast and a topgallant-mast for a jib-boom. The weather continued fine and on the twentieth we came up with the brig *Lady Margaret* from Manila, bound to Australia. Captain Mills kindly supplied me with tools and cooking utensils. On the twenty-fourth we made Sandalwood Island and for four or five days had heavy squalls and rain. In the Ombay Passage we were spoken by the *Cygnets*, Captain Dearborn, and the *Lebanon*, Captain Drew, who both offered assistance, but I wanted none. We kept company with them for two or three days through heavy squalls.

On the fourth of February we came up with the ship *Lady Amherst*. We were beating up the south coast of Bourne and we had a most exciting day of it. The English ship had all her canvas and I was under jury rig, but at six P.M., if the breeze had held, I should have passed to windward of her; but the wind gave out and we parted. We worked hard all night and at six A.M. we were ten miles ahead of her, but we lay becalmed while she was coming up with a good breeze. She got within a mile of us and then she was becalmed. The Captain sent a boat on board of the *Houqua* and said he could let me have a spar to make a jury mast, and I went on board his ship to see what he had. The Captain was enthusiastic over my ship's sail



the day before. After a while I bought the spar and some blocks and ropes, supposing he would let me have them on reasonable terms, but he charged me five hundred per cent. more than I could have got them for in Hong Kong. I was going to back out of the purchase, but he told me that if I refused assistance and anything happened to me I should lose the insurance. I took them and paid for them by a draft on Russell & Co. in Hong Kong, under protest at his extortion. It was noon when we settled, and as a breeze might spring up at any minute, I requested him to put the spar in the water and the other articles in his boat and help me get them on board my ship; but he declined to ask his men to do it, as they were just going to dinner and had worked hard all night. I asked permission to speak to his crew and he gave it. I went forward and told them my ship was in distress and it was very important for me to have those things aboard at once, and asked them to do it at once. They jumped to their feet and in a short time had the spar overboard and their boat loaded with the blocks and ropes, and then towed the spar alongside my ship and helped get it on board. They worked with a will, and by one o'clock they were back to their ship again.

With light breezes and calms for two days we kept company with the *Lady Amherst*. On the sixth of February I kept off for Cajeli, island of Bouro, for water, anchored in Cajeli Bay at seven A.M. on the seventh of February. Bouro is under the Dutch Government, and it had a Malay Governor and under-officers there. The Governor could speak English and was very intelligent. He gave me a cordial greeting and wanted to know what he could do for us. We took a walk in the forest and I bought quite a number of trees for a mere song. I thought they would



make good studding-sail booms, and that one large one would make me a good mizzen-mast. While my men were loading water I had my carpenter come on shore to cut down the trees, which cut as soft as pine wood; but when we came to haul them down to the beach they were so heavy that we might as well have tried to move the island, so we cut most of them up for fire wood. Then we went to work to get our jury mainmast up, and we were enabled to set a foresail on it. Bouro is one of the Spice Islands and the Dutch send their ships there for coffee and spices of all kinds, which the natives collect for the Dutch Government. They also furnish the famous Cagaput oil, called by the natives "Caiai pooty" oil. The Governor wanted to sell me a lot of it, but not knowing enough about its value I bought only fifty bottles at one dollar a bottle. When I got to Hong Kong I sold it at seven dollars a bottle. It was perfectly pure oil, and I was told that one seldom saw such oil. While in port my steward gave the Governor a lot of garden seed; and some months afterward, when my brother Edward was a passenger in the *Valparaiso*, bound to China, and they put into this bay for water, they were supplied with vegetables raised from this seed. We had a very pleasant time, and filled up with water and wood and vegetables and fruit, and after a week's stay we left on the fifteenth of February.

When we passed through Dampier Straits north of New Guinea, a great number of natives came alongside, and as we were perfectly defenceless, I bought up all their bows and arrows. We were becalmed, and before long we sighted war canoes coming after us, some with fifty stark naked, six-foot natives on board; but fortunately for us a smart squall came up and we ran away from them.

I thought at one time it was all up with us, for we could have done nothing against two or three hundred savages.

After getting into the Pacific we had light winds, but we had no further incidents worthy of mention. On the eleventh of March we made the Bashee Islands, south of Formosa, and with fresh breezes ran across the China Sea and came to anchor in Hong Kong on the fourteenth of March, having made the passage from New York in one hundred and thirty-one days, sixty days under jury masts.

On arrival I found Mr. Wolcott, agent from A. A. Low & Bros., who took a great interest in the ship and gave me much help. I abandoned the cargo to the underwriters and acted as their agent. The bulk of it was cotton goods and these were all badly damaged; some of the bales in the lower hold had their outside wrappers fairly burned off by the heat; and if they had been stowed with grease, spontaneous combustion would have taken place and the ship burned up. We had the whole cargo landed, and then we sent to Canton and the surrounding country advertisements in Chinese, for an auction to be held in Hong Kong of damaged goods, on such a date. The Chinamen gathered in crowds and bid against one another and the whole cargo was sold for cash for more than it would have brought in Shanghai if delivered there in good order.

After disposing of the cargo I had a survey and estimate of the cost of repairing made, and was recommended to put the ship in as good order as possible. At Jardine's Point, to the east of the city, there was a good ship-yard carried on by a Boston man named Fraser, and I had the ship towed there and moored close in shore. There were but one rigger and one sailmaker in the place, so that

my crew would have to do pretty much all the fitting, rigging and sailmaking. I called them aft one morning and told them what was to be done, and also told them that I would give them grog three times a day, and after the day's work was over they could have liberty to go on shore, but that they must not bring any liquor on board or come on board drunk. They agreed to all and though we were there over three months I never lost one man, nor did I have a drunken man on board among the crew. The second mate, whom I found at his prayers when he should have been at the pumps, I had to discharge for incompetency and drunkenness.

My sailors fitted all the rigging and made most of the sails, and rigged the ship all by themselves with the exception of getting in the lower masts, when I hired Chinamen to help. We had to heave the ship out to look at her bottoms, and then we found that we had had a very narrow escape indeed, for when the mainmast had turned under the ship and come out on the weather quarter, it had pounded against the bottom and had come very near to knocking a hole in two or three planks. In one barely an inch of good wood was left. Besides doing all the work required by me, the sailors helped to heave down quite a number of small vessels that had to be repaired, and they made quite a lot of money which I gave them liberty to take. They were a splendid lot of sailors. I had some difficulty in getting suitable rigging and my quarter boats were not at all like the ones I lost, but I had to do the best I could.

In the first week of June we were all staunch and ready for sea. We took in a load of cotton goods for Shanghai and left Hong Kong on the twenty-fourth of June with a light breeze from southwest. On the second of July we

came to anchor at eight P.M. in four and a half fathoms of water, and lay all night with fresh breeze and heavy rain. At six A.M. grounded on the south bank of the Yang-tse River and had to bury the chain and slip it, and make sail up the river. At six P.M. came to anchor. July fourth at six A.M. got under weigh and proceeded up the river, and at ten A.M. came to anchor off Woosung. July fifth Captain Roundy of the opium ship *Ann Welsh* came on board and piloted the ship to Shanghai, where we discharged our cargo and took in a load of tea. On the sixteenth of July we were all ready for sea, when a heavy typhoon set in and we had to send down topgallant-royal- and skysail-yards and topgallant-masts. The ships all dragged their anchors and fouled each other. The *Houqua* dragged into the English ship *Queen* and both ships were slightly damaged. The wind very fortunately shifted, or every ship in port would have gone on to the Bund. Russell & Co.'s godowns were blown down and there were three to four feet of water all over Shanghai.

On the twentieth of July we dropped down the river and anchored outside of Woosung. On the twenty-second we were clear of the Yang-tse and with strong gales from the southwest beat down the Formosa Channel. August third we passed the Lema Islands and anchored inside of Green Island; August sixth got under weigh and proceeded to Whampoa, where we discharged our teas to be repacked, but we were not to take them home and I had to make another trip to Shanghai. However, since we had been making money I was very well satisfied; it did not matter to me where I was sailing as long I was doing well for the ship and owners, but I *was* tired of hurricanes. On the thirty-first of August I was again ready for sea when we had a fearful typhoon and I had to send

down my topgallant-masts with all the yards and let go a third anchor. The two bower anchors had ninety fathoms of cable on each. We rode out the typhoon in safety, but it was reported that *fifty thousand* Chinamen were drowned around Canton. The *Isabella Robinson*, a large English opium ship, was sunk at Capsingmoon and twelve or fifteen vessels were sunk or driven ashore at Hong Kong. This was my third experience of hurricanes inside of a year and I wanted no more, though as it would be the typhoon season for two months yet, I knew I might be favored with more. It was three days before we were all ataunto. On September third we got under weigh and dropped down the river; passed the Bogue forts at two P.M.; at six P.M. came to anchor. At six P.M. of the fourth got under weigh and proceeded to sea with light southwest winds. On the seventh we had a very heavy gale from northeast with barometer sinking and a heavy sea on. Close-reefed the topsails and reefed the foresail and as the gale was increasing, kept away for Chinchew harbor; ran in under reefed foresail and came to anchor in six fathoms of water, having run from a heavy gale into almost calm weather. We lay as comfortably as possible in this harbor, though by going to the tops we could look out and see the ocean one sheet of foam. We had to lie at anchor three days before the gale abated, and then we had pleasant weather; and we reached Shanghai on the fifteenth of September, where we lay till the nineteenth of November, waiting for the teas to come in. Here I received a letter from my father, the first I had had from any one of my family since my experience in the hurricane, and it gave me great comfort to know that I had met with favor in regard to my care of my ship.

“NEW YORK, July 4, 1848.

“*My dear Son:*—You will perceive by the date of this letter that I can have but little expectation of its reaching you at Canton or thereabouts. Nevertheless, I feel bound to embrace the earliest opportunity presented to congratulate you on your most miraculous escape from death in January last. I cannot but regard the circumstances of your delivery as the arrangement of guardian angels to preserve you from death. You can hardly realize how your description of the scene has impressed all hearts, and I trust the impression made upon your own mind will never be erased, and that it will lead you to a deep and abiding conviction that you are, as well as all the human race, the perpetual objects of God’s care, and the constant recipients of his mercies. The circumstance of your escaping from a watery grave is very striking, but as I view the Providence of God, the fact that you were inspired with a presence of mind, courage, resolution, fortitude, prudence, as well as blest with health and strength to endure and meet the emergency of the occasion, were equally the gift of God, and should be cherished by you as continual causes of thanksgiving to Him. I cannot but remark too, how much you were blest with a willing and able crew, and how fortunate for them that none were lost at the time you went overboard, and that your mate was so ready to adopt the measure which was so absolutely necessary to prevent your ship from going to the bottom. Such no doubt has been the fate of many vessels overtaken by the fury of the same elements and not a trace has been left to account for their loss. We give God thanks for your preservation and pray without ceasing that his parental care may continue to guide, protect and preserve you and return you to us in his own good time.

“The report of your disaster came from Hong Kong from the ship *Cygnets*, a month or more before we heard of your arrival. The intermediate time was a season of great anxiety with all of us, but your Mother happily was



not aware of the many dangers to which you might be exposed before you could reach Hong Kong. The navigation, I was aware, was at all times critical, and as you were in a crippled condition, I was much concerned lest you should be met by lawless depredators of the sea and be unable to employ any of the usual means of escape; but the hour arrived when our hearts were made glad with the news of your arrival. Your letters were read with great greediness. Josiah will write you, and as he holds a ready pen you will receive from him a full and minute account of the sensation which your graphic description of the disaster has made upon our community. Your letters have been going the rounds and have been read with great interest not only by our own family, but by many out of the family, and we find, greatly to our joy and satisfaction, that there is but one opinion of your conduct, and that is highly honorable to you as a seaman, a man of courage and judgment and resolution. Your misfortune, as it appeared to you for the moment, redounds greatly to your credit, and will secure to you a high degree of consideration wherever the circumstances are known and justly appreciated. Our best seamen all acknowledge that the hurricane was most awful, and that you did everything a man could do. Mr. Hale of the *Atlantic* expressed himself in terms of great satisfaction and admiration of your conduct and said that your resolution to carry the ship to Hong Kong was deserving of great praise, and had saved a great deal of money for the office. Capt. Hudson of the Navy read the account which I send you from the Journal of Commerce, with great interest. He said he had read it twice and that his wife wept like a child while he read it. No doubt she recalled to mind the dangers to which he had been exposed in the *Peacock*. In fact, those best qualified to judge of your proceedings have been the most ready to approve. Much more of the same sort I could detail, but it is sufficient to say that you will never want a ship to command as long as your character stands as well as it does now. I hope nothing will occur to render it



otherwise, and that the words of commendation which will come to you from all quarters, will not operate to render you less considerate, manly, kind and judicious and popular than you have been. I trust I have said enough upon this subject, but if I have not, you will receive from other sources enough to give you great comfort and satisfaction amid all your trials. We feel that you must have been greatly disappointed in not finding Edward at Canton, which was your loss but our gain; we were relieved by the fact that Mr. Wolcott was on the spot and had the disposition as well as power to render you important aid. We are now waiting with great impatience for further letters, hoping that in them we may learn the destination of the ship and when we may indulge the pleasure of looking for your return."

The balance of the letter referred to family matters which do not belong here.

At ten A.M. of the nineteenth of November we got under weigh and proceeded down the river. It was not till the twenty-fourth that we bade good bye to the muddy waters of the Yang-tse River, and it was with no feeling of regret. On the twenty-eighth we anchored in Hong Kong, and on the twenty-ninth we left for New York, with Mr. and Mrs. Toby as passengers. After eight days we passed Anjer; passed Cape of Good Hope in forty-two days; crossed the line in sixty-two days; had a fair run through the northeast trades to 34° north, when we had a succession of calms and gales of wind from north northeast, so that we did not reach New York till the sixth of March, making ninety-seven days from Hong Kong. This was a short passage, but if we had had good luck from the equator it could hardly have taken over eighty-seven. However, I was glad enough to take a pilot on board and be relieved of the responsibility.

I had a most hearty reception from my father and brothers and from many captains and old friends. Captain Nat Palmer was as glad as any one to see me, for he had been the one who had urged me on in my career, and he appeared well satisfied with his protégé. What a happy time I had in meeting my mother and sisters! and what a big reception I had in the evening! When I told of my experience in the hurricane people could hardly believe that I was there to tell of it. My happiness that first evening made up for all the trials I had gone through. I was made very happy too by my brother Abbot, who told me that if I had made the voyage as it was laid out when I left New York, the ship would have lost forty or fifty thousand dollars, but as she had been delayed and made the two trips from Hong Kong, and at last brought home the first of the New Year's teas, she would clear more than sixty thousand dollars.

The next day I went over to the ship, and it was with fear and trembling that I saw Captain Nat Palmer coming down the wharf. I knew that the ship was not as good as when I left New York; there was much rigging that was too large, and the quarter boats were nothing like the American boats which I had lost. But when he came on board, I pointed out to him all that was amiss, and he said to me, "Don't you worry, you saved your ship and saved the insurance companies a lot of money and they have got to make everything good, and I shall see to it that they do."

And he had no trouble about doing it. In a day or two they called a survey and I pointed out to them what was wrong. They told Captain Palmer to see that everything was made as good as when the ship left New York; to have new quarter boats, new rigging, or whatever was



THE HOUQUA

"On her beam ends in the Indian Ocean, January fifteenth, 1848."



needed. Captain Palmer took them at their word and before she went to sea again she was as good as new in every respect.

A few weeks afterwards my father and brother Abbot and Captain N. B. Palmer went with me to the Atlantic Insurance Company's office, where I was interviewed by several presidents of insurance companies interested, and thanked by them for my good seamanship and for saving the ship and cargo. Then Captain Palmer was asked to help me pick out the finest chronometer to be had in New York and to have a suitable silver plate put upon it. After I left them Captain Palmer and I went at once to Negus & Co.'s navigation warehouse, and we purchased an eight-day chronometer which Mr. Negus guaranteed to be the best watch in the city. Its cost was eight hundred dollars; and a silver plate, costing fifty dollars, was engraved and put on top of it. The inscription was as follows:—"Presented by the Atlantic, Sun, Mercantile and Union Mutual Insurance Companies of New York and the Insurance Company of North America of Philadelphia to Captain Charles P. Low, late master of Ship *Houqua*, as a testimonial of their approbation of his good conduct in saving said ship and cargo, after having been thrown on her beam ends in the Indian Ocean on the 15th of January 1848 in a violent Typhoon, and nearly filled with water, but by the extraordinary exertions of the Master and crew was righted and subsequently taken by them to her port of destination which was 3500 miles distant." The chronometer proved to be one of the finest timekeepers ever made; for two or three years it had no rate losing or gaining, but ran mean time.

On the sixth of April, 1849, just one month from my arrival in New York, I again sailed in the *Houqua* for

China. As usual, a large number of people, with Captain Palmer and my brothers and sisters, accompanied the vessel to Sandy Hook. Mr. Stephens was mate, and was the same one who had helped me so much in fitting the ship in Hong Kong; but in those days pretty much all the crew were brought on board drunk, and it required much patience to deal with them. The sailmaker was a hard character and refused to work, and the mate had to haul him out of his room, which looked to those on board the steam tug so brutal that Captain Palmer was requested to take the mate out of the ship. I was very angry at his interference, but it was of no use; the pilot was ordered to bring the ship to anchor, and the mate and myself were taken on board the steamer and went to New York, and I had to get another mate. We soon found a man whom I was much pleased with, and the next morning early I was off for the ship. The new man, Mr. Thayer, had a loud, clear and commanding voice, and at first I thought I was lucky, at so short notice, to get so good a man, but I soon found that he was no sailor, very timid about carrying sail and did not keep a good watch. The men soon found him out, but I had to put up with him till I got to China, where I discharged him.

The voyage was pleasant. We crossed the line in twenty-one days, two days less than on my first voyage, passed Cape of Good Hope in forty-six days and anchored in Anjer in seventy-eight days from New York—a very good passage—and in ninety days anchored in Hong Kong on the fourth of July. On the fifth we got under weigh and proceeded up the river to Whampoa. I found my brother Edward there awaiting me, and we went up to Canton together. I had a good room assigned me, and after transacting my business had a very pleasant time for

a few days, when I went back to the ship. My brother told me it would be three months before I could load for home, so I ordered the topgallant masts sent down on deck and the rigging all overhauled, and had a mat house built over the ship fore and aft, which protected her from the hot sun, for at that time of year it was very hot. Under the mat house, however, it was cool and pleasant.

Mr. Thomas Hunt, who left the ship some years before, now kept a ship chandler's store and was quite a rich man and married. I spent many pleasant hours on board his ship or hulk. Besides, there were many ships in harbor, and with no business to do we had leisure for dinner parties. Moreover, the merchants came from Canton once a week and oftener, and spent the time on the different vessels. My brother Edward came down often, and sometimes I would go to Canton for a week or ten days. Time passed rapidly. At this time very exciting reports came from California of the finding of gold, and letters from New York stated that the *Samuel Russell* on arriving home would probably load for San Francisco. As I was promised command of this ship when I got home, I was very anxious to be loaded and start on my homeward journey. Early in September my brother told me we should be ready to sail the last of the month, and by working hard we were loaded and started September twentieth down the river. We left Macao on the twenty-first, with a fine breeze from the north northeast and had two fine days' run, but after that, light, variable winds, mostly ahead, and it was the eighteenth of October before we anchored in Anjer, twenty-six days from Macao. With a good run across the Indian Ocean we passed the Cape of Good Hope sixty-seven days out. On January eighth, 1850, we took



a pilot off Absecom and reached New York in one hundred and nine days from Macao.

When the pilot came on board the first question I asked was, "Has the *Samuel Russell* sailed for San Francisco?" He said not, but that she was to leave the next day. I told him to hurry and get to New York for I was to take command of her. When the steamer got alongside to tow us the Captain said that he was to take me to the wharf where the *Samuel Russell* was loading, and we did indeed make fast to the end of her pier. Captain Theodore Palmer, who was in command of the *Samuel Russell*, came on board and wanted to know if I would take command. I told him I would if I could settle up the business of my last voyage in time. He replied that I should have two or three days. He then went on board of the ship and ordered the mate to have all the sails taken out of the fore peak and put in the cabin, to make room for more freight. The mate said, "Captain Low is going in the ship, is he not?" and Captain Palmer said, "Yes, he will take command." The mate said, "I knew it, for if you were going it would not be done, for the ship is loaded now as deep as a sand barge." And she was: her scuppers were not more than a foot out of the water. There was plenty of freight offering, and the ship had a freight list of nearly seventy-five thousand dollars, and a dollar and a half a foot, or sixty dollars a ton, for all she had on board. My brothers met me at the wharf and I told them I was ready to take command, but they thought that I ought not to; that I should take more time on shore. I told them the shore was nothing to me and so the command was handed over to me.

It was a busy time for me; I had to enter the *Houqua* at the Custom-house and pay off my crew, and settle up the business of the voyage. But Captain Palmer helped

me by keeping charge of the *Samuel Russell* and getting her ready for sea. I had a most pleasant time visiting my relatives, eating sometimes two or three dinners in one day so as to get around the family. I sent my clothes on board the *Samuel Russell*, dirty ones and all, (not having time to get any washing done, as I expected to sail in three days.) As it happened, a strong easterly gale set in, and detained the ship for awhile, but on the fifteenth of January, six days after I took the pilot, bound in, I left the pilot at Sandy Hook, bound out on a voyage around the world.

We had a fresh wind from the westward, and when we reached the Gulf Stream we found how deep in the water the ship was, and how slowly she rose to the seas. The wind increased to a heavy gale, and while running under close-reefed topsails and foresail a sea boarded us over the starboard quarter. The mate, Mr. Limeburner and myself were swept more than sixty feet and brought up in the main rigging. The man at the wheel was carried into the mizzen rigging. The binnacle and the two large compasses were swept overboard. The mate was the first to get to the wheel and it was in time to save the ship from broaching to. None of us were hurt, but the decks were filled with water fore and aft. Left without compasses we had to steer all night by keeping the wind astern, and as it was steady from the northwest we kept on the right course. In the morning we had a look for other compasses but could find only a boat's compass about six inches in diameter. I had the carpenter take my dog house and make a binnacle to use till he could make a proper one; and we steered with this small compass till we reached below Rio Janciro. We had three passengers,

a Mr. Robinson, a Mr. Clark and a Dr. Bradshaw. The latter was a druggist and was a very simple-minded man. He had kept a small drug store in the Bowery, New York, and he told me he had resided in one place for twenty years and in all that time he had never tasted an oyster. Mr. Robinson and Mr. Clark also came from the Bowery. They wore slouched hats with two letters on them, *F. F.*, standing for *Funny Fellows*, a club of that name. They were chock full of fun as well as good singers and good story tellers, and the poor doctor had to take many a joke which they played upon him. He learned more of the world from them than he ever knew before. Mr. Limeburner, the chief mate, was from Maine, and had been in the employ of my brothers for a number of years; he was a splendid sailor. Mr. Hayes was second mate, also an A 1 man. He was short and stout, but very active and was always on the watch. We had a good crew and everything went on smoothly. The small compass gave us a great deal of trouble as it could not be seen distinctly day or night, but we managed to get along and in twenty days we crossed the line. This was the third voyage in which I had made the passage to the line in less than twenty-three days, a great run of luck. In twenty-nine days I was in the latitude of Rio Janeiro, and in the morning we made a large ship ahead, running in for that port. As we got near to her I made her out to be a seventy-four gun ship, the American line-of-battle ship, *Ohio*. I took in my skysail and royal, hauled up the mainsail and hoisted my ensign Union down, showing I was in distress and wanted a boat sent to me, but no attention whatever was paid to my signals. The *Ohio* was just back from a long voyage and in a hurry to get to port. When I arrived in San Francisco I sent a protest to my brothers, and they

sent it to Washington, but I never heard that anything came of it. I was very angry for I wanted one or more compasses to take me around the Horn. Two days afterwards I spoke a ship loaded with passengers, some three hundred or more. She hove to for me, and my mate went on board and returned with two fine, new compasses, which the captain loaned to me, only requesting me to leave them with his consignees at San Francisco. I regret that my journal of this voyage was lost and that I cannot remember the name of the Captain or ship. I left the compasses as desired, but he had not arrived before I left.

We were now getting into waters that I had never sailed in before and had no experience in. The barometer was unusually low and I lost some days in rounding the Horn, from carrying small canvas in preparation for gales that never came. But we had very high seas, and the ship's decks were flooded day after day. Sometimes she would go under water and it seemed as though she would never come up. Rounding the Horn is going from 50° South in the Atlantic Ocean to 50° South in the Pacific Ocean, and we made a very good passage of seventeen days. From 50° South we had mostly light winds, and crossed the line in the Pacific, ninety days from New York. From the line we were nineteen days to San Francisco. We made the Farallones early in the morning and spoke a pilot boat. I asked the price, and was told eight dollars a foot—that meant on the number of feet the ship drew in the water. Now I had an excellent chart of the harbor, and I thought if I could not take my ship into such a harbor I ought not to command one, and I refused to take the pilot. He said I would have to pay half price any way. I replied that it was better than paying full

price, which would have amounted to one hundred and sixty dollars. As we entered the Golden Gate the wind increased rapidly, and we went in flying, and came to anchor just where I would have done if I had known all about it. I anchored about one mile and a half from shore, directly abreast of the office of my agents, Macondray & Co. Captain Macondray and Mr. Watson, his partner, came on board at once, and congratulated me on my short passage, and said it was the shortest by twelve days that had been made. Great placards were posted in the streets saying, "Shortest passage ever made from New York, one hundred and nine days. Ship *Samuel Russell*, Captain Charles Low, arrived this morning." The next day, as soon as I entered the ship at the Custom-house, D. L. Ross & Co. sent a note to Mr. Limeburner, the mate, offering to give him one hundred and fifty dollars in gold if he would send their goods on shore at once. As these were boots and shoes, light goods, and had nearly all been stowed in the cabin, ninety cases were immediately put in the lighter and sent ashore. The other cases were found a day or two later, and again Mr. Limeburner received a note saying, "We are still ready to pay the one hundred and fifty dollars if you have found the balance." And he then sent the remainder. Nothing more was said about it till a few days before we went to sea. My mate asked me what I would give him for that note of D. L. Ross & Co. I told him I would give him fifty dollars. He replied, "You are too willing, I guess I will wait." A day later I went to my consignees and found a note for the mate from D. L. Ross & Co., saying the money was ready when he chose to call for it. I had a Mr. Wilkinson my discharging clerk, with me, and I endorsed the note and sent him to them and he returned with the one hun-

dred and fifty dollars in gold. When I handed it to Mr. Limeburner he was struck dumb. "Well," he said, "I never earned so much money so easy, I would like to bet I lose half of it before I am ten days older." He went on shore and bought a watch and chain, paying seventy-five dollars for them. We went to sea and one morning he went out on the jib-boom and the watch chain caught in a hook and hauled the watch out of his pocket and broke the chain, and both went overboard. When he came aft to me he said, "I told you, Captain Low, I would lose half of that money in less than ten days."

And now to go back to our arrival in San Francisco. Captain Macondray told me all about the mining excitement and said that my crew, if not my mates, would all leave for the mines the first chance they could get. I had a fine crew and good officers, and I was loath to have them leave me, so as soon as Captain Macondray and Mr. Watson went on shore, I called all hands aft and told them I was aware that they wished to go to the mines, but that there was no hurry about it, and that if they would discharge the cargo I would pay them the wages they shipped for, and while they worked discharging cargo would allow them five dollars a day, stevedore wages. They could then leave me, if they wanted to, and be in good shape to begin work at the mines. They readily agreed and my three officers agreed to keep watch at night, a regular anchor watch, an officer and two men, relieved every four hours. I felt quite safe and was quite sure I would get my cargo discharged in good shape. I had lost one of my quarter boats in the gale a short time after leaving New York, and had but one left, which I kept at the davits. When we had discharged all but fifty tons of cargo, I came on board in the afternoon and



was told by the mate that a very nice quarter boat had been picked up adrift and that it was towing astern. I told the men I would advertise it, and whatever reward was paid for it I would divide among them. I turned in that night and awoke at six A.M. and went on deck. Nobody was on deck, neither officers nor men, nor watch. I walked aft and looked over the stern; the boat was gone. I looked at the davits; the quarter boat was gone. I went to the mates' room and found the chief and second mates snoring in their bunks. I called them out and told them to muster all hands and see who were left. I then found that the third mate, sailmaker and nine men had cleared out, taking two or three light sails, a barrel of biscuit, all the cooked provisions and considerable salt beef and salt pork. Here was a nice mess! I had no boat to go on shore with and was a mile and a half from shore. Shortly after breakfast, Captain Prescott of the brig *Eagle* came on board and I went on shore with him and offered a reward of twenty-five dollars to any one who would bring the boat back. These men were so foolish as to leave the wages due them and as much as one hundred dollars apiece besides, when in three days they could have had it in gold, and gone off comfortably and honorably. It saved me enough, however, to pay stevedores to discharge the balance of the cargo, and much more besides.

Some ten days after my boat was stolen, my consignees were dining on board on a Sunday, and after dinner we were sitting on the quarter deck, smoking our cigars, when a boat pulled alongside and a man came on deck, walked aft and asked for Captain Low. I replied that I was the man. He said, "I understand you have lost a boat." I told him I had and he wanted me to describe it, which I



did. He said, "I have your boat." I told him to bring it back and I would pay him twenty-five dollars, the reward I had offered. He said, "Captain Low, I will bring your boat back for one hundred and fifty dollars." I told him I would not pay more than twenty-five, but I would have him arrested for having stolen property in his possession. He turned on his heel and was over the side before I could get up out of my seat. The next morning I went on shore and went into the office, when Captain Macondray handed me a note. I opened it and found it came from this boatman's lawyers, saying I must pay the man one hundred and fifty dollars, or they should bring suit against me for the amount. I was dumbfounded to be made to pay twice the value of the boat which was my own property. I showed it to Captain Macondray and he smiled and told me I was in California where they did strange things, and he thought we had better go and have a talk with the lawyers. They made out a very plausible case for the man—said he was getting five to ten dollars a day, which he would lose, and besides it had cost him twenty-five dollars to get to San Francisco from where he found the boat, and then again, much more expense would be incurred if he went after the boat and brought it down to me. After talking a long time I paid him fifty dollars and agreed to send after the boat. It cost me fifty dollars more to get it, but I could not do without it and I could not buy a new one for less than two hundred dollars. Such was San Francisco in 1850.

After I lost my boat I had my carpenter build a skiff that would hold comfortably four people. Up to this time I had not been ashore after dark—there were sights enough to see in the daytime. Gambling houses and saloons were all over the city; on the side walks you

could see tables and piles of gold, and rough miners gambling from morning till night, and inside the saloons from night till morning. One afternoon Captain Kane, of the ship *Tarolintu*, wanted me to meet him on shore after dark and go and see the sights. I had no objection and after dinner I took with me Mr. Wilkinson, my discharging clerk, and went on shore. (Our cargo was such an assorted one and there were so many consignees, that my agents would not trust the first officer to keep the account; he had to look out for other things and might miss the tally and lose track of some goods; so they preferred to pay a man for the express purpose. Before the cargo was all discharged I found the wisdom of it.) We two pulled our skiff on shore and met Captain Kane and first went to the largest and most luxurious gambling place in the city, called the "Bella Union." It was a large building on the Plaza, lighted up with chandeliers filled with candles and oil lamps. As we entered we saw that the first gambling table was run by a large, coarse-looking woman. The game was roulette. I brought ashore with me three dollars and I put down a fifty-cent piece on the "seven to one." With singularly good luck I won every time till I had over thirty dollars. Captain Kane and Mr. Wilkinson did not have the same good fortune, but I believe lost nothing. As I did not desire to gamble for the sake of gambling, but merely to see the different games, we went to another table, and I soon lost all I had made, and only had fifty cents left, while my companions had done well, so I told them I must "go back to the old lady;" and I did and won over thirty dollars again. In a very short time I was reduced at another table to my fifty cents and again had recourse to the roulette, where I won some twenty dollars. Then

I tried another game and was fortunate enough to win over fifty dollars. It was getting late, and we had seen most of the gambling games, but we went to try one more and I lost most of my gains. It was a wonderful and most exciting experience. I presume there were some eight hundred or a thousand men and women in the hall, a band playing, and a free lunch set in four different parts of the hall. The men were all excited; piles of gold dust were on the tables, and next to them the owners laid their revolvers and knives. I had a few dollars left, and I suggested trying the old lady at the roulette table again; but my luck was gone and I left the place without a cent. I did not feel very badly for I had really lost only three dollars and I had received more than their value in fun and experience. We had a worse time before we regained my ship.

It was near twelve o'clock when we got into our skiff and dark as pitch, with a strong ebb tide running. Captain Kane and Mr. Wilkinson took the oars, and I steered. Captain Kane and myself both realized the danger we were in, and concluded to catch hold of the first vessel we came across. We soon saw a barque ahead with a scow astern; we were being rapidly borne by the tide away from her, and just as we were alongside of the scow Captain Kane broke his oar. Mr. Wilkinson, however, managed to catch the side of the scow, and we all jumped into her. It was a flat-bottomed craft, used for lightering coal, only about five feet deep. As we stepped into the bottom there was a foot of water in it, cold as ice. The wind was cold too, and though we hailed the barque we could get no answer. On looking around, however, we found a small yawl boat towing astern. As my skiff had floated off into the Pacific Ocean, Captain Kane took the yawl

and said he would go on shore and get a boatman to come out and take us off. We wished him good luck, but I for one did not expect he would find us before daylight. Mr. Wilkinson and myself got up onto the after end of the scow, and there we sat, wet up to the knees; there was no place to walk and we were half frozen. We sat there over an hour, when we heard a hail from Captain Kane, which we answered, and he was soon alongside with a Whitehall boat and two experienced boatmen. They hesitated a long time about trying to find my ship, but wanted to take us on shore to stay till daylight. However, they consented to try for the ship, and about four o'clock in the morning we got on board, all tired out and half frozen. We had to pay the boatmen a good, round sum for the night's work. I lost my skiff, and the Captain of the barque lost his boat, for Captain Kane left it on shore. I believe, however, that Captain Kane found him out and told him where he could get it. It was lucky that we got safely back to the ship, for it is no child's play to be in San Francisco Bay on a dark night, with a strong ebb tide running, in a poor boat and with only one oar. A few days after this experience, my second mate, with the men whom I had sent up the river after the quarter boat, arrived safely, the boat in good order. I was relieved to see them, for it had been very uncertain whether they would come back or not.

We were now nearly ready for sea, and the question was where to get a crew. The shipping officers told me it would be impossible to get sailors to take my ship to China, as sailors were getting one hundred and fifty dollars in gold to go to Honolulu, and I should have to take my chances of getting men there from the whalers, or take Kanakas. I had to do this. I shipped fifteen men at

that price, and on the fourteenth of June I went on shore to get my crew on board. I had some eight or ten on the wharf and we were waiting for the rest, when the cry of "Fire!" was raised, and before I had time to turn around my men were gone. I discharged the boatman, and concluded to go myself. The fire started just a little above the wharf at Washington Street and spread at a terrible rate. I had a great many friends in the city, and I helped as much as I could, and worked all day long; but it was of no use, for the fire had the most of the city in its grasp and devoured everything before it. Houses built of sheet iron curled up and were destroyed almost as soon as the wooden houses next to them. The firm of G. B. Post & Co., my ship ehandlers, was located on the beach near Market Street—it is now Montgomery Street. Their building was a one story, wooden building, and at least one hundred feet away from any other. I got down there about four in the afternoon and proposed to Captain Parker that we should eover the building with blankets and wet them down with salt water. He agreed to it, and we cut open several bales of blankets and with a strong force of men to help, soon covered the roof and sides. We kept at work pouring salt water on them while the fire was raging in a lumber yard near by. Meantime the Mayor and city officials had come on the scene. They, as well as most of the citizens, had too much liquor on board and were very much excited, and ordered the building to be blown up. They had already placed powder in the house before they thought of ealling us from the roof. We scrambled down pretty quickly and protested against such a foolish thing, but it was of no use; a train was laid to the powder and away she went, and in less than a half hour nothing was left but ashes. I lost a very fine

overcoat that I had left in the office. When the fire had about burned itself out I went across Market Street to Macondray & Co.'s. This being a very wide street, there was no danger; but as they had seventy-five thousand dollars of the ship's money, I was still anxious, and remained there all night. The next day buildings were going up in all parts of the burnt district. Never were there a more plucky set of men than the San Francisco merchants.

As early as I could I went to see my shipping merchants to find my crew, but little satisfaction could I get from them. However, I was determined to try for the men, and with two policemen and one of the shipping officers I went to a sailor boarding house, which we found filled with sailors sitting around tables, with piles of gold before them, gambling and drinking. As soon as I made my appearance they sang out, "Hallo, Captain! come and have a drink!" I asked if the crew of the *Samuel Russell* were there, and they replied, "Oh yes, Cap., we are all here and we are going to stay for the present." And some of them began to blackguard the ship, calling her all sorts of names, and I saw it was time to leave. Sailors in those days had no liking for captains and officers of ships and the policemen advised me to wait awhile. The shipping officers said they would try and find a crew as soon as possible and I did wait until the next day, when I found a crew willing to ship by the run to Honolulu. They wanted one hundred and seventy-five dollars apiece and were to be discharged as soon as the ship was safely anchored at Honolulu. My conscience went against it, but Macondray & Co. advised me to take them while I could get them, so I shipped fifteen very good men and got them on board. On the sixteenth of June we sailed,



but I had to pay every man his one hundred and seventy-five dollars in gold before they would go to work getting the anchor. I was glad enough to get away from such a gambling den and be at sea again.

The first two days we had a fine breeze, but afterwards had light and baffling winds. We however made a very good passage of fourteen days to Honolulu. We ran in as close to the breakers as I dared, and let go the anchor, but the chain fouled and would not run out fast enough to get a hold, and I let go the second anchor. But the ship had got stern-way and was drifting off the land very fast. At that time there were some fifty fathoms of chain out on each anchor and when we went to work to get them it proved to be a big job. An English pilot came on board and told me I must slip my anchors, but I told him I was going to try for them first. We hove away for some time when a French man-of-war, which was lying there, sent a crew of twenty men and an officer to help me. They were too strong for my windlass, which was broken by the great strain. The pilot was very mad and the men called him a hog in French. He came to me and told me of it and I said I did not understand French, but I thought they were about right. As I had no tackles strong enough to get the anchors, the French officer went on board his ship and brought back more men with their heavy heaving-in tackles, and after working all night we secured both anchors. When daylight appeared we were nearly out of sight of Honolulu and dead to leeward, and had a job to beat back, the Frenchmen on board helping us in every way. It was four in the afternoon when Captain Meiggs, an American pilot, came on board and took us safely into the harbor. The French sailors would not leave us till all the sails were furled and deck cleared.



I gave the officer one hundred and fifty dollars to divide amongst his men, but I doubt if they got a cent, for the next day as I was pulling on shore, one of the French boats was going out, and the coxswain hailed me and asked me if I did not give money to the officer for them. I told them yes, and how much. I heard them say "*Sacredame!*" and jabber in French till they were out of sight. As soon as we were safely anchored the men I had shipped in San Francisco took their leave and went on shore; their time was up and they had earned their money very easily. It took fifteen days to repair the windlass. In New York it could have been done in four or five.

Honolulu then was a very small place, and about the only business there consisted in supplying whalers with stores, and shipping their oil to New York and New Bedford. Kamehameha Third was King and he had many nobles in his household. His Prime Minister was John Stephens, a fine looking man, six feet tall and large in proportion. Through the American Minister I sent him an invitation to dine with me, with several of the most prominent members of his council, and he accepted. He was much pleased with the ship and before he left he invited me to use his horses at any time, but not being a horseman, I did not take advantage of his offer. John Stephens came to me one day and wanted me to join a party to go up the valley on a picnic, to which there were several Americans going. We went and had a very good time. The capacity of these natives for stowing away liquor was something marvellous; a bottle of brandy and a bottle of champagne were nothing to them. On the Fourth of July all the Americans in the place and some fifty natives were invited to a native feast at Waiaiti, some eight miles from Honolulu, where, as I recollect, over

one hundred people sat down to dinner, and such a dinner I never tasted meats and fowls so beautifully cooked. A large trench had been dug and large fires built near it in which stones were heated red hot. They were then placed in the trench, and turkeys, chickens, mutton and all the eatables were done up in plantain leaves and placed on the stones and the trench filled with earth. All the juices of the meats were thus preserved and they were cooked to a nicety and were perfectly delicious. Champagne and other drinkables were in profusion and the crowd was a jolly one. It was the biggest dinner I ever attended, but I was glad to get back to the ship. I think the natives kept it up all night.

The windlass having been repaired and all made ready for sea, and being unable to secure any white sailors, I shipped seventeen Kanakas. They had never been to sea, and could talk very little English, but they were born sailors, strong and active and very willing, and they learned very quickly. Just before going to sea, my second mate fell down the hold and broke his collar bone, and was laid up. As I had no third mate, I had to stand my watch, and I told my mate that we must work hard to train these Kanakas to take in sail in a hurry, for we were going to China in the typhoon season, and it was necessary to be able to shorten sail quickly. So in my morning watch, from four to eight, I would exercise them in reefing and furling the sails on the mizzen-mast, and the mate did the same in his watch. When about two miles outside of the harbor, I found eight or ten women on board, wives of the Kanaka sailors. The pilot told me they could take care of themselves and that I need not worry. When he was ready to leave I ordered the women to go. They obeyed very leisurely, took off their clothes and made them into

bundles, which they fastened on top of their heads, went down the side ladder, dropped overboard and started for shore. We watched them till they were out of sight. They made great headway and they must have covered the distance in a little over an hour. The Kanakas I had shipped at fifteen dollars a month, and I gave bonds for five hundred dollars to return them to Honolulu. We had fine weather and many calms, and the mate and myself exercised the men every morning till they could handle the canvas very quickly. The mate was rather rough on them and I was continually telling him to "have patience." One morning I had the watch and had just called the mate at seven bells, when a squall came down upon us and I ordered the royals taken in. One Kanaka was rather slow in getting along and I gave him a rap over the head and started him moving. Just as I did so, I heard the voice of the mate saying, "Have patience, Captain Low, have patience!" He had just turned out, and was standing in the companion-way and enjoyed giving me some of my own medicine.

Without having encountered any bad weather we anchored in Hong Kong, fifty-one days from San Francisco, having sailed seven thousand four hundred and sixty-two miles. We were ordered to Whampoa at once, and we arrived there August twenty-fifth, 1850.

My brother Edward was there to meet me and he told me it would probably be two or three months before I could load for home, but that I should load at Whampoa. In coming up the river with very high spring tides, the pilot ran us ashore on the first bar of the river, where we lay for twelve hours, and at low water the ship keeled over on her beam ends. It being very hot, my splendid Newfoundland dog went mad, and tumbled into the

hold and was killed. I thought everything of him and I felt as badly as if I had lost a dear friend.

When we got off the bar I thought best to take the ship into the dry dock, and as a result of the survey made I was recommended to have her caulked and coppered. It was certainly necessary, for her copper was worn very badly. She had come to no harm while on shore, but the copper had worn out. As we were stripping the copper off we had to have a strict watch set to see that the Chinamen did not steal it, but instead of the Chinamen, it was my Kanaka crew who were caught stealing, so I was very glad that an opportunity occurred to send them back to the Islands. I had to pay for each one's passage fifty dollars, and I got a Consul's certificate showing I had kept to my bond.

The time passed very pleasantly as usual in Whampoa: hardly a day went by but that a dinner was given on some ship, and clerks came down from Canton and joined in; so with trips to Canton for three or four days or a week, the time slipped away very rapidly. About the tenth of October, 1850, we began to load for New York, and on the twenty-eighth we finished and got ready for sea. To my surprise my brother said he was going home with me, also Mr. Hallam, tea-taster for Russell & Co., Mr. Burdett and his sister, Mrs. Haskell, and two or three others whose names I have forgotten. We had a cabinful and all were pleasant people. By October twenty-ninth we were out in the China Sea and homeward bound. I had secured a ton of ice, and I gave it in charge to Mr. Hallam, who took such good care of it that it lasted to the Cape of Good Hope, forty-eight days out. He would fill bottles of water and place them on top of the ice and only allow ice water at meal times.

During the voyage home my brother gave me a book describing a trip from New York through the southern states to Mobile and New Orleans and up the Mississippi to Lake Michigan and Straits of Mackinaw, then down through the St. Lawrence to Montreal and Quebec, down Lake Champlain and Lake George, through the White Mountains to Maine, and back through Boston to New York. It was the most interesting book of travel I ever read, and every night my brother talked it over with me, and we decided that I must stay at home one voyage and take the trip with him. I was very much excited over it and promised him I would go with him surely. We had a jolly crowd on board and Mr. Burdett had a splendid cornet which he knew how to play. This enlivened the evenings and helped to pass away the time. We crossed the equator in the Atlantic in seventy-one days, and had a fine run of eighteen days to Sandy Hook. We carried warm weather all the way and on the twenty-sixth day of January, 1851, when we took the pilot, the thermometer was 76° and we had not changed our white linen jackets and trousers. On getting inside the Hook the weather grew chilly and we went on board the tug boat to shave, as we had no fire on the ship. We hauled alongside of the wharf early in the afternoon. At night the wind came out a howling gale from the northwest and next morning the thermometer stood two degrees below zero, a fall of seventy-eight degrees in less than twenty-four hours! It was the greatest change in temperature I ever experienced, and it took hold of my brother and myself as we went from Brooklyn to New York. I was thankful, though, that we got into port as we did, for otherwise there would have been a week's detention with a ship covered with ice.

The first day after my arrival I had to enter the ship at the Custom-house, make up my accounts, pay off the crew and finish everything that pertained to the voyage. My brother was with me all the time and we still talked of our trip till we had been in port four or five days. But when I went to the office one morning my brother Abbot called me to him and said he wanted me to go up to Westervelt's yard and see the new ship they were building, and see what I thought of her. Of course Edward went with me, and I found a ship on the stocks a third larger than the *Samuel Russell*. We went all over her, and a finer and handsomer ship was never built. I expressed myself as highly delighted with her, and said to myself that if I could have command of such a vessel it would be the height of my ambition. We went back to the office and my brother wanted to know how I was pleased. I told him she was the most beautiful vessel I had ever seen. He replied that he wanted me to go the next morning and take charge of her and see to her fitting out. I almost lost my breath, and turning around to my brother Edward said, "The Straits of Mackinaw and that delightful trip of ours must be put off; I would not give up such a ship as the *N. B. Palmer* for all the pleasure trips in the world." All he said was, "I do not blame you."

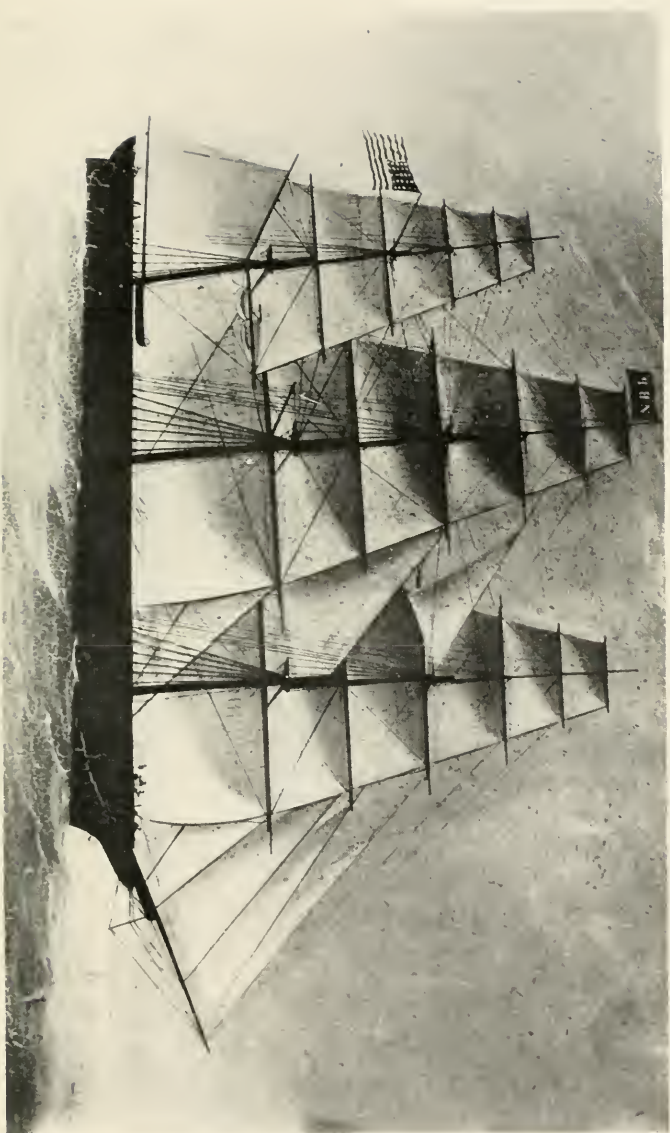
A. A. Low & Bros, handed the *Samuel Russell* over to Captain Limeburner, who was well worthy of the command, and I took charge of the *N. B. Palmer*. I had very little to do, however, till she was launched, as her hull was not completed, but I went to the ship yard every day, being greatly interested in the work. I often spent many hours in the Novelty Iron Works close by, watching the men handle the great shafts of iron and other large pieces of machinery.



Sometime in March, 1851, the ship was ready for launching; she had all her spars aloft, royal and skysail yards crossed, and she looked splendid—no ballast but her chain cables in the hold. Captain Palmer, to my disgust, put me in charge of a steam tug with a large number of young girls and men and women of his acquaintance, to go and see the launching from the water. I wanted to be launched *in the ship*. However, I had a jolly crowd to take care of and we had a fine lunch, champagne and cigars on board, and a better view of the launching than they had from the shore. It was a splendid sight to see that huge craft slide down the ways into her native element. After it was over, we went back to Peck Slip and landed the passengers and I went up to the shipyard and found the ship alongside the wharf, leaking like a sieve, and Captain Palmer in no good humor. It was too late to get her on the dry dock so we had to have men to pump her out every four hours through the night. Upon getting her to the dry dock the next day, and up high and dry, we found a hole where a locust trenail had been left out. This piece of locust was used to fasten the plank to the timbers, and was an inch and a quarter in diameter; and a lot of water can be forced through such a hole. After being repaired the ship was towed down to Peck Slip to load for California.

As there was now little for me to do, I proposed to my brothers to give me a vacation. Since going to sea I had had no let up, and I thought I deserved it; besides, my brother Haskell was anxious that I should get married, and I was willing. He said there was a Miss D. who lived in South Danvers, the handsomest girl in the town, and through his brother-in-law, who lived there, he would give me an introduction. So having received permission to





CLIPPER SHIP N. B. PALMER



leave, I started one fine afternoon in April for my vacation trip. I first went to New Hampshire to see some old friends of mine and then to Salem, Mass. I put up at the Essex House, and sallied out from there to South Danvers, and found out Mr. William Cutler and was received very cordially. I was invited to a party the next evening to meet a number of young ladies, and Miss D. was to be one of them. I do not remember much about any of them, but I do know I was not smitten by the beauty of Miss D. I did not take to her at all, though she *was* handsome. Night after night I was invited to parties, but I was not at first carried away by any of the young ladies of South Danvers. Finally, at one of the usual gatherings, it happened that eight or ten young ladies were asked to sing, but each and every one had a cold—or something else was the matter—and wished to be excused, until at last a very prim young girl with black eyes, was asked. She said not a word but without any affectation went to the piano, and played and sang as long as they wanted her to. As soon as I heard her voice I went and leaned over the piano and looked at her, and I was a “goner.” I said to myself, “That is the girl for me.” I ate a philopena with her and after the party I went back to the Hotel and was happy. The next morning I went to see her to philopena her but she opened the door and was too smart for me and philopened me, just what I wanted her to do. I had hired a horse and green chaise, and I asked her to go and take a ride. She said she could not go without her mother’s consent. That was all right, and we soon had that consent, and were off. Where we went I do not know, but we must have driven fifteen or twenty miles, and I had never driven a horse before! But I did finely. When we got back to the house

her cousin was there and I got him to hold the horse till we got out. (I was rather uncertain about how to bring the team to an anchor.) There is not much more to say. I was very happy, and forgot all about my ship and that I was captain of one and had got to leave my beloved, till I was rudely awakened by a letter from my father, asking where I was, and telling me that the ship was almost ready for sea and that I ought to be on hand attending to my duty. I believe I had not written a word home since I left. I immediately got ready to return. I think I had known Miss Tucker some six days or a week. I proposed to her and was accepted. I left at once for New York and arrived at my home in Brooklyn about ten o'clock at night, and found my mother sitting up for me. She cried out, "Charles, where have you been?" I told her I had been getting engaged and then I had to tell her all about it. Well, she was very much surprised, but on the whole, pleased. I reported the next morning on board the ship, and was not pleased at having been hurried home, for I found it would be many weeks before the ship was ready for sea. However, I went to work, and my story became known to all the family.

After I had been at home about a week, I was on board ship one Saturday afternoon, when at about three o'clock my brother Abbot, with Captain Palmer came on board. I suppose I looked rather disconsolate, for my brother said, "Charlie, you would like to go to South Danvers, would you not?" I told him, "I would indeed," and Captain Palmer spoke up and said, "Why should he not go?" and my brother said, "You have time to catch the boat at five o'clock, but not much to spare," and he handed me fifteen or twenty dollars and told me to be off. Well, I had to fly, for I must go to Brooklyn and pack my valise

and then get over to Pier No. 1, North River, New York, to take the *Bay State*, Captain Jewett, for Fall River—But I did it and had time to spare—I only had a few days to spend with my betrothed, and then back to the ship I went and on the sixth of May we left New York for San Francisco with light winds from the southwest. In latitude  $82^{\circ}$  north, longitude  $51^{\circ} 34'$  west we passed the Brig *Emblem* of Halifax, water-logged and abandoned, mainmast gone a few feet above the deck, foremast and fore-topmast and bowsprit and jib-boom standing. It had evidently been abandoned for some time and we did not stop as there was nothing to be gained. We crossed the line twenty-eight days from New York. It was no fault of the ship, but of the weather, that the passage was so much longer than my two previous voyages, for the ship was all I could wish for, and much faster than any ship I had ever sailed in, and a splendid sea boat in heavy weather.

On the sixth of June we passed the Island of Fernando Noronha off the coast of Brazil, a Portuguese convict settlement in  $5^{\circ}$  south latitude. On the ninth passed Pernambuco; about ten miles off the town looked very pretty with its white houses. With moderate breezes along the South American coast we made Staten Land on the third of July, and on the sixth passed Cape Horn, sixty-one days from New York. We crossed the line in the Pacific in eighty-eight days and on the twenty-first of August entered San Francisco Bay, one hundred and seven days from New York, two days shorter time than my passage in the *Samuel Russell*. The pilot came to an anchor some three miles from the wharf, refusing to take the ship any further till next day. I had my boat lowered and manned, and rowed to the city, where I met Mr. Sanford, the agent for A. A. Low & Bros. He was a

regular driver, a Nantucket man, and he wanted to know why I had not brought the ship up near the wharf. I told him "The pilot refused to bring her any nearer," and he said, "The ship must come up to the wharf," and I said, "If she must come up, she must," and having found the wharf we were to tie up to, I went back on board and told the pilot, "The ship *must* go to the wharf at once." He said he would not take her. I told him then that I would, and I ordered up all hands and set all the sails, skysail and all. There was an ebb tide, and the wind light abeam and I knew I could take the ship right alongside of the wharf. We got under weigh and went along finely. I knew that sails would stop a ship, as well as send her ahead, and I kept every stitch of canvas on her, so that if I missed the wharf I could still keep command of her and try again, but there was no occasion, for as soon as I got near enough I backed the main-yard and went alongside the wharf so easily that there was hardly a jar. The steamer *Senator* was lying alongside of the next wharf and my flying-jib-boom just lifted two of her planks off the wheel-box. A great crowd on the wharf cheered me most heartily. Mr. Sanford cried out, "Well, done!" As soon as we were made fast I took in the sails and furled them. It was the prettiest piece of seamanship ever done in San Francisco and I received lots of compliments. The pilot felt very mean about it; he stayed down below till we got near the wharf, but said nothing.

We had no trouble this time; the crew were paid off and left, only the ordinary seamen and boys stayed by. The stevedores under Commodore Allen took charge and the cargo was discharged in a short time. Mr. Sanford saved me a great deal of trouble.

San Francisco was filled with smart men, and in a year the place had greatly improved. Wharves had been built, and many fine stores had replaced the wooden shanties. But there were a great many bad men in the place and they had committed so many robberies and murders that it became necessary to have a Vigilance Committee to root them out. One Sunday at noon I saw three men taken from the jail and hanged somewhere near Market Street, before a great crowd. Many more were hanged and many sent out of the city and warned that if they returned they would be strung up. Exciting times then, but the city was saved, and it became very safe for men and women to go around the streets day or night.

After discharging the cargo we took in some three hundred tons of ballast and seventy-five Chinese dead bodies in wooden boxes as freight. At that time captains received an eighth of money paid for passage, but dead bodies were considered freight. So one smart captain, to secure this passage money, loaded his cabin with corpses and called them passengers. This is a fact. He was paid seventy-five dollars for each one, and as he had some hundred dead Chinamen in his cabin, he pocketed a very nice little sum.

After getting our ballast in, we hauled out into the stream to save wharfage, as we had to wait nearly a fortnight to get a crew. Sailors were very scarce and wages twenty-five dollars a month; but by the seventh of October we had enough men to handle the ship and we sailed for Shanghai. I had for passengers Mr. Harry Burdett who had been with me on the *Samuel Russell*, and came from New York with me, Stephen S. Smith, a lumber merchant in San Francisco, and a Mr. Keeler, who had once been a schoolmate of mine. In 1849, at the beginning of the



gold fever, he and three hundred others bought an old whaling bark and loaded her with lumber and stores of all kinds, and chose an old whaling Captain to take her to San Francisco. He had not been to sea for some years and he thought this was a good chance to see the old places where he had been so many times. The first place he stopped at was Fayal, one of the Azores. Then he brought up at the Cape de Verde Islands; from there he went to Rio Janeiro and Montevideo; also stopped at the Falkland Islands to shoot geese and other game. After rounding the Horn he put into Talcahuano, and then went to Valparaiso. Here the passengers kicked when he said the *next* place he would stop at was the Society Islands! It had been very pleasant during the first part of the voyage to see strange places, but so long a voyage began to be rather tedious. They had been out six months already, and wanted to get to their destination. So they turned him out and secured another Captain, but the old bark was a slow sailer and it was very nearly a year from the time they left the United States before they arrived at San Francisco. It was very amusing to hear the old Captain tell of his experience. He had been very successful after his arrival and made quite a little "pile," and now was going home by the way of China on business.

After getting to sea we had one good day's work of two hundred and eighty miles, then calms and then three days' good run, then many days of calm. On the tenth of November at two P.M. we made out a vessel dismasted, eight miles to windward. We hauled on a wind and beat up to her, and found her to be the American ship *Austerlitz*, a Boston ship in ballast, bound from San Francisco to China, Captain Day. She had been dismasted in a

eyelone four days previously. I lowered a boat and went on board to see what could be done. There was nothing but her foremast standing and her mizzen-mast with a cross-jack set. She had four hundred tons of stone ballast in her lower hold and she rolled terribly, with a quick, jerky roll, so that it was almost impossible to stand on your feet. She was a rotten old tub, not fit to be sent to sea. The Captain had his wife and a little girl of about three years old with him. The ship was a long way from China, and it being hurricane season, it was useless to try to save her, and after a talk with the Captain I told him he was justified in abandoning her and that I would take all hands on board my ship and land them in China. I then returned to my ship; shortened sail to her three topsails, and hove to as close to the *Austerlitz* as it was safe, and with two of my boats and one of the other ship's, went to work to save some stores, canvas, paints, rope and other things easily transported. It was slow work, and it was twelve o'clock at night before we had the Captain, wife and child safely on board. I told the Captain he must set fire to the ship as she would be dangerous for another vessel to run in to. The crew with their dunnage, and the Captain with all his personal property, being safely on board, the wind quite fresh, I filled away. Captain Day felt very badly to see the flames as they rose high in the air, consuming his home in which he had lived for a number of years. The worst of it was that at daylight the wind died away to a calm. If it had only done that six hours sooner, I could have saved a great deal more of provisions and other stores, but she was gone and that was the end of her. The *Austerlitz* had two good officers and fourteen good sailors, so that I was well manned even in case I met with a hurricane. Captain Day and Mr.

Burdett and a gang of men went to work and painted the between-decks and the upper works, and my ship looked finely to go into Shanghai.

On the fifteenth of November we were running with a fresh breeze from the east, when I noticed the weather ahead looked very squally and the sky very black and threatening. The barometer was falling and I felt sure I was running into a cyclone. My passenger, Mr. Smith, said he would like to see a typhoon. I told him I would show him all I wanted to see of one. At four P.M. the wind came in heavy gusts and I shortened sail to three close-reefed topsails, but still kept on my course; at six P.M. there was no doubt that I was running right into a hurricane. Mr. Smith said he had seen enough, and went below, drenched to the skin from a sea that toppled over the quarter deck. I knew that the hurricane was travelling west and that by heaving to I could get out of it, so I called all hands and took in fore and mizzen-topsails, and hove ship with her head to the eastward. It blew a furious gale all night and it was nearly twenty-four hours before the barometer had risen enough and the weather settled enough for me to make sail and proceed on my voyage. That I was wise in heaving to when I did was shown soon after I arrived in Shanghai, for the report came from there that the ship *Witchcraft*, Captain Rogers, had put into Hong Kong dismasted in a typhoon in the Pacific. Some time after I reached Hong Kong and saw Captain Rogers, who was an old friend of mine, I compared logs with him and found I was only twenty-five miles to the eastward of him when he was dismasted, and that if I had stood on for two hours longer, I might have been in the same fix.

After the typhoon we had good weather and brisk winds

from northeast to east northeast, and I arrived in Shanghai on the twenty-fourth day of November, 1851. After lying there for some two weeks I was ordered to proceed to Whampoa, and on December eighth I left Shanghai and proceeded down the river, passed Gulataff Island, and in seventy-five hours anchored in Hong Kong. I had sailed a distance of eight hundred and forty-six miles, an average of eleven miles an hour; it was about as short a passage as was ever made. December fifteenth I left for Whampoa to take in a cargo of teas and silks for New York.

Nothing of moment happened that I remember, and we took in our cargo and on the ninth of January set sail for home. At nine A.M. on the tenth we passed the Great Ladrone Islands near Macao, and with fresh northeast monsoon and rainy weather sailed rapidly down the China Sea. Five days out we passed the Great Natuna. In ten days from Macao we passed out of Sunda Strait into the Indian Ocean. February nineteenth passed Cape of Good Hope, forty-four days from Macao. April second took a pilot and steamboat and at four P.M. hauled alongside the wharf, eighty-four days from Macao to New York.

As soon as I could pay off the crew and settle the account of the voyage, I hurried off to South Danvers to see the girl I left behind me. I had a free passage in the *Bay State*, Captain Jewett, to Boston by the way of Fall River, and reached my destination and found all well. I could not stay long before I had to go back to my ship, but I made arrangements to be married on the eleventh of May. My ship was to leave about the twentieth for San Francisco, so I had to hurry up, and on the eleventh of May, 1852, I was married in South Danvers to Miss Sarah Maria Tucker, by the Rev. Charles E. Dwinell of Salem. My brothers, Haskell and Edward, were the only ones of my

family who were present, but some two hundred of my wife's friends were there. I was a little put out when my bride was about to go down stairs, for the minister then asked for the marriage license. I never was married before, and knew nothing about licenses and no one had informed me that it was necessary to have one; so I had to go and hunt up the town clerk. Fortunately he was at home and he quickly gave me the document which allowed me to be married, and the rest of it was soon over and we were made man and wife. I say it was *soon over*, but I had to stand about two hours, shaking hands and receiving the good wishes and congratulations of the company. The next day we left for Brooklyn to prepare for a wedding tour around the world.

On the twenty-third of May the ship was ready for sea and was towed down the Bay with a large number of friends to see us off. The weather was fine and at two P.M. we cast off from the steamer, made sail and soon left the shore far astern. We had some twenty passengers on board, some four or five ladies among them. The next morning at breakfast my wife was the only one who joined me at that meal; all the rest were seasick. Now it is a great lottery for a shipmaster in taking a wife, and one who has never been on the water. A wife may be seasick all the voyage, or she may be very timid and afraid of a squall or a breeze of wind, which makes it very uncomfortable for the husband as well as herself. My first fear, of her being seasick, was now put at rest, and I was soon to know that there was nothing to fear as far as being timid was concerned, for on the third day out we had a strong breeze from the southwest and I was carrying sail as much as the spars would allow, and the ship careened over so that the water rushed past the port holes of the cabin with



SARAH MARIA LOW  
at the age of nineteen years



CAPTAIN CHARLES PORTER LOW  
at the age of twenty-seven years





a great rush. About ten P.M. the ladies, being scared, went to my wife's room and asked her if there was any danger. She replied, "I don't know, my husband is on deck." They received no other comfort from her, but when I heard of it, it was a great comfort to me. During the twenty-four hours that followed, the ship made three hundred and ninety-six miles, a big day's run. After this the wind died down and we had pleasant weather, and nothing of interest happened until the seventh of June, when we came up with the clipper ship *Gazelle*, which left New York six days before us. The next day she was twelve miles astern of us, but we were now in the Doldrums, and for four days we were in company with the *Gazelle*. Some days she would get a breeze and come up to us and again we would run away from her. On the thirteenth of June we took the southeast trades and crossed the equator twenty-four days from New York, the *Gazelle* a long way astern. We had light trades from the equator to the latitude of 32° south. At noon of the first of July, after taking the sun for my latitude, a ship was sighted dead to windward, and I took the spy glass and went up to the mizzen-top, and after a good look at her I made up my mind it was the *Flying Cloud*, that left New York ten days before us. This ship on her first voyage made the passage to San Francisco in eighty-nine days, and was considered the fastest vessel ever built. She was commanded by Captain Creesy, an old friend of mine, but I left San Francisco ten days after she did and beat her to China. She left China for New York about the same time as the *N. B. Palmer* and I beat her ten days on the passage, and now I had come up with her, beating her ten days thus far and only forty days out. I felt very proud of it. We were both running before the wind and

I was confident that I could outsail her, so I hauled up close to the wind with my studding-sails shaking and waited for her to come up with me; I wanted to be certain that it was the *Flying Cloud*; and sure enough, she ran alongside of me and Captain Creesy hailed me and wanted to know when I left New York. I replied, "Ten days after you." He was so mad he would have nothing more to say. My ship was now at a standstill, and he was going ahead at full speed, and he ran ahead of me. Shortly after I filled away, the wind hauled ahead, and we had to haul in the studding-sails and brace sharp on a wind, and he got quite a start of me. I expected that on a wind he would beat me at least a mile an hour, but next day, just twenty-four hours after he passed me he was but twelve miles ahead. The weather now changed, and for eight days we had heavy gales with snow and hail. In latitude forty-eight south, at midnight, while making sail, a man by the name of Lemons shot the mate through the leg, and another man by the name of Dublin Jack knocked the second mate down with a handspike. I was just getting my boots on to go on deck, when the mate called to the steward to give him a musket. I jumped out of my room and enquired what the matter was, and the mate told me he was shot and that I must not go on deck. I took the musket in my hand, but he said it was not loaded. I replied that it did not matter, and bade him tell the steward to call the carpenter and sailmaker and get a lantern and come on deck. The crew were hoisting up the mizzen-topsail, and as soon as the sail was set I ordered all hands to pass before the mate and myself, and told the mate to pick out the man who shot him. He said Dublin Jack was the one. I had him put in irons, and then the man Lemons came up and said *he* was the man who had shot

the mate. I started to raise the musket to knock him down, but as I had seen nothing of the row, and my blood was cool, I dropped it and asked him where the pistol was. He said he had thrown it overboard. I asked him if it was a revolver. He said "No, and that if it had been, neither I nor my mate would be alive now." I only replied, "You are mighty cool about it," and ordered the irons to be put on him and placed him in the after hatch. I took the irons off of Dublin Jack and told him to keep a good lookout for himself, as I should keep my eye on him. He replied, "All right, keep it on me." And I meant to, for I knew he was a big rascal. I then sent the watch below. Fortunately we had two English surgeons on board, and I sent the mate down to have his leg looked at. As it was my watch on deck I stayed there till I saw the second mate with his arm in a sling and asked what the matter was. He said that when the mate was shot, Dublin Jack knocked him down with a handspike. I told him he should have let me know before I let Jack out of irons, and that would have saved a good deal of trouble. However, the men had gone below and I could do nothing before morning. Mr. Mowbray and Mr. Colby reported to me that the ball had gone through the left leg about a foot above the knee; it had not touched the bone and there was no danger of the wounds proving serious, but they said that the mate must keep quiet for some time.

The next morning I called all hands to witness punishment. I had for a crew thirty able seamen, six ordinary and four boys, and placed as I was, with my mate laid up, my second and third mates incompetent, I felt that I must not show the least fear, but must show that I was able to take care of my ship. I had a rope stretched across the ship, and told the men that if any of them stepped across

it I would shoot them. I had my pistol ready, and Dublin Jack, for whom I was on the watch, stepped one leg over the rope. I went for him at once, caught him by the throat, carried him nearly fifty feet and landed him on the quarter deck, put the irons on him quick as a flash and lashed him to the mizzen-mast. Then I had Lemons taken out of the after hatch and triced up to the mizzen-rigging, and told the second mate to give him four dozen lashes with a piece of ratline stuff. He refused, saying he had never done such a thing. Neither had I, but it was no time to falter, and I told him to give me the rope, and I thrashed Lemons well, for I was angry at him and angry at the second mate for not supporting me. He was then taken down and put in the after hatch, and then Dublin Jack had his turn. He wanted to know what I was flogging him for. I told him for knocking the second mate down, and because I wanted to. After the thrashing was over I went forward and told the men if they were not satisfied with the morning's work, to step out one by one and I would thrash the whole of them. Fortunately for me, none of them wanted to try it, but there is nothing like a show of strength. I then sent them to breakfast. After they had eaten their breakfast I turned all hands to and worked them till I found there was no more mischief in them, when I let them have their watch and watch, and everything was quiet. But I had a hard time of it. Mr. Haines, the mate, was laid up for eighteen days, and the second and third mates were of little account, so that I had to keep the deck almost constantly. The weather was fearful; storm after storm with high seas and snow, rain and hail, kept me on deck, and for eighteen days I did not sleep below, but tumbled down in the corner of the house on deck in my wet clothes, and got only a few

hours' sleep during the twenty-four. I only went to my room to wind my chronometers and take the time, and yet my wife in all these troublous times never gave a sign of fear, but was braver than any man in the cabin. Fifty-seven days out we passed Cape Horn, but the gales continued. On the twenty-sixth of July Mr. Haines returned to duty and I had a little rest, but for twelve days or a fortnight the stormy weather continued, the wind being ahead most of the time. We were twenty-eight days from Cape Horn when we sighted the Andes Mountains near Valparaiso. On the sixteenth of August we anchored in Valparaiso harbor in thirty-five fathoms of water. In stowing the cargo in New York the stevedores had stowed the beef and bread and coal under many tons of cargo, so I put into Valparaiso to get beef, bread and coal, and also to send the two mutineers home to be tried for attempted murder on the high seas.

We found there the steamer *Brother Jonathan* under command of Captain Baldwin, and my cousin, C. Adolphe Low, acting as Purser. They left the next day for San Francisco; it was very pleasant to meet them. Afterwards they established a mercantile house in San Francisco under the firm of C. Adolphe Low & Co. and it became one of the largest and most respected firms of that city.

As soon as possible I visited our Consul, Mr. Carroll, and informed him of the mutiny on board the ship, told him that the men were in irons and that I wanted them sent home to be tried for attempt to murder on the high seas. He said that he must come on board and take the affidavit's of the mate and myself, with a formal request from myself to have them taken out of the ship and sent home. He did this and then took the men on shore and placed them in jail. I was glad enough to be rid of them.

There seemed to be no end of trials for my wife and myself on this wedding tour. One afternoon we were invited to dine with the members of the house of Alsopp & Co., my agents. We had a pleasant time, and after dinner went to the Hotel to spend the night, but meeting a very unpleasant person there, we decided to return to the ship. It was not permitted to leave the shore after dark, but we found a boat at the jetty, with two young men in it, who offered to take us off. The first thing we did in getting into the boat was to step in about six inches of water. It was too late, however, to make a change, and we pulled off into the Bay. We soon found we could not see, for a dense fog had rolled in, and I told my wife we must get on board the first ship we came to, or we might be carried out to sea. After a while a huge vessel loomed up before us and I hailed her, told who I was, and said I would like shelter till morning. We had a hearty invitation to come on board, and though it was no trouble to me, I hardly knew how my wife was going to accomplish it. The ship was flying light in ballast, and her sides were twelve or fifteen feet out of water, with nothing but a Jacob's ladder to go up. This is composed of two ropes running through pieces of board about four inches wide, placed fourteen inches apart; but my wife was equal to the occasion and went up ahead of me and we landed on the deck of an English ship. The Captain was very kind, took us into the cabin, which was very small, and brewed us some hot port wine negus and gave up his state room to us. We passed a very good night. In the morning it was clear, and going on deck I found my ship within hailing distance, and thanking the Captain for his kindness, we hailed the *N. B. Palmer* and the mate soon appeared with one of the quarter boats and took us on board.



During the night some twenty of my men had deserted the ship and I had to go on shore again to report to the Consul. He could not help me he said, for Valparaiso was noted for its hiding places, and it would be useless for me to try and find them. Well, I told him I must have more men for I could not go to sea so short-handed. He shrugged his shoulders and told me that Valparaiso was the worst place in the world to get a crew, for there were nothing but beach-combers and scoundrels to be had. However, he promised to do the best he could for me. Just as I was about to leave the office a fine-looking young man stepped up to me and asked if I wanted a crew. I told him I did, and he said he wanted to ship and he had seventeen men who would go with him; he would see them and let me know in the morning. As every one knew that there had been trouble on board my ship, and that the greater part of my crew had deserted, the idea of shipping eighteen men who were shipmates looked a little scary, but I could do nothing better and I believed the man who spoke to me was a good man if I was any judge of character.

After leaving him, I thought I would go on board the United States sloop-of-war *Raritan*, Commodore McAuley, and tell him I wished him to take the mutineers to New York and not to let them have an easy time of it. He told me he would take good care of them, and in such a way that I was quite satisfied.

By the way, he said, my wife and some other ladies had just left him and were in the ward room. He showed me the way, and sure enough, there was my wife with three ladies and the mate. They had persuaded the mate to take them on board, as none of them had ever seen a man-of-war. I joined them, and told my mate he could



take the shore boat and that I would bring the ladies on board in the ship's boat. When we were ready I had my boat brought to the gangway and got my wife and Mrs. Edwards in. There was quite a sea on, and it was difficult to keep the boat from going under the gangway. Just as we were way down, Mrs. Stout jumped and came into my arms, and at the same time the boat was lifted by the sea and came up directly under the lower steps and was swamped. I got hold of my wife and Mrs. Edwards got hold of me, and so I had the three ladies and myself to hold while the boat left me hanging to the iron which held the gangway up. The sailors on the man-of-war came at once to the rescue, and except for a good ducking, no one was hurt. The ladies went on board while the men were bailing the boat out, and afterwards got back to the ship in safety.

The next day I went on shore and saw my man about the crew, but I saw none of the men. I told him if they were all on board at noon the next day, sober and willing, I would take them; otherwise, I would not. I left word with the consul to ship them, and then gathered up my stores and prepared to go to sea the next day.

August twentieth the men came on board punctually at twelve o'clock, and a fine set of men they were; all but one were perfectly sober. I had a few words with the one who was rather the worse for liquor, and some of his shipmates took him forward while the man through whom I had engaged them apologized for him. We got under weigh and proceeded on our voyage, and a better set of men I never had under me. I tried very hard to keep them with me after our arrival in San Francisco, but they preferred to ship at big wages by the run to some near port, and work their way back at going wages. They were

making money and were saving it, and doing better than if they were working in the mines.

We had pleasant weather and good trade winds and made good progress. August twenty-ninth spoke the ship *Columbia* of Salem, Mass., from New York one hundred and fifty days out, while we were only ninety-four sailing days. On the third of September we were boarded by Captain Parsons of the whale ship *Rebecca Simms* of New Bedford, thirty-five months out with fifteen hundred barrels of sperm oil. The rest of the voyage the winds were moderate. On the twenty-first of September we came up with and spoke the ship *Gazelle*. She had been run into by a Spanish ship off Cape Horn and her bowsprit and all her head-gear had been carried away. It was about ninety-five days since we had left her just north of the equator in the Atlantic, and now again we picked her up in the North Pacific. On the thirtieth of September we made the Farallones, and at noon hauled alongside the wharf in San Francisco after a passage of one hundred and twenty-five sailing days and one hundred and thirty from New York.

We lived on board the ship and enjoyed our stay in San Francisco very much, having considerable company. My cousin C. Adolphe Low, and Mr. Sanford and others dined with us often. Captain Chapinan of the *Senator* (lying the other side of the wharf) was running to Sacramento, and when he came down from there he used to send on board a fresh salmon, which was very fine.

After our cargo was mostly out my wife and I had a free passage to Sacramento, and we had a very pleasant time. A Mr. Bruce, an old friend, took us to drive to the Washington gold diggings about twenty miles from

Sacramento. It was very hot; there was no wind and the fine dust filled the air and lay in the road six feet deep. I never saw anything like it. When we got back we were a sight, covered from head to foot with fine dirt. Though the trip was pleasant and we would not have missed it on any account, we were glad to get to our home on board ship.

It is customary for the crew and also for the officers, to call the Captain the "Old man," no matter how young he is, and one morning when I had gone on shore, the carpenter came aft and asked the steward if the "Old man" was on board. The steward said I had gone on shore. Then the carpenter asked, "Is the 'Old woman' on board?" This my wife heard, and being only nineteen years old, she rather resented it, though I had a hearty laugh when I heard of it.

We had but three weeks in San Francisco and they passed very pleasantly. After having taken in three hundred and fifty tons of ballast we were ready for sea. We had some difficulty in securing a crew, but on the twenty-first day of October we left the Bay for Manila, Philippine Islands. The voyage across the Pacific was uneventful. Light winds most of the time, and we arrived in Manila the sixth of November, forty-five days from San Francisco. We were in Manila but nine days; took in some thousand bales of hemp and then sailed for Hong Kong.

Manila was a very pleasant place to visit. Carriage hire was very cheap, and in the afternoons most of the foreign residents gathered at the Plaza to hear the Spanish band play, and drive around the shore of the bay. Myself and wife had our quarters on shore with Peele, Hubbell & Co. where we lived on the fat of the land and made

many acquaintances. We were sorry to leave, and yet were anxious to get to our journey's end and be on our way home. We had a pleasant passage of six days to Hong Kong, arriving there at six P.M. of December twentieth. After remaining three or four days, I was ordered to Whampoa to load teas for New York. On arrival there I took my wife to Canton, where we had comfortable quarters at the house of Russell & Co. I had to go to Whampoa often, but my wife made many acquaintances and the time passed very pleasantly for her. As we looked for an increase in the family before a great many weeks, we were fortunate in securing a Miss Hemenway, who wished to return home. She proved herself a valuable nurse.

We left Whampoa on the fifteenth of January, 1853, and on the seventeenth were two hundred and fifty-four miles from the coast of China and on the twenty-fifth passed through the Straits of Gasper, with fine breeze. At seven P.M. we had light airs from southwest and at eleven P.M. made the North Watchet, a small island in the Java Sea. It is some two miles in diameter and rises to the height of two hundred feet, densely wooded from the top to the sea. Around it is a white, sandy beach, and in the bright moonlight it was a splendid sight to look at. I called my wife and the passengers to see it. We passed close to it at midnight and by two P.M. it was some eight miles to the north of us. I tacked ship to the west northwest. At four A.M. I was looking at the chart and had just pricked my position on it and got out of my chair to go on deck to tack ship, when the ship struck on Broussa's shoal, while going at the rate of eight miles an hour. Immediately we laid all sails aback, started the water forward, and rolled all the salt provisions from

forward on to the quarter deck and ran a kedge anchor out astern. The wind freshened and she came off the reef, but we had to let go the hawser and kedge anchor, which we lost. On sounding the pumps we found the ship leaking seven inches an hour; we could also see that the fore-foot was gone, or at any rate it looked that way. The leak increasing, I resolved to put into Batavia, about ninety miles distant. I had never been there, but I had good charts, and at six P.M. I had nearly reached the place to anchor, when I was called to my wife. I hurriedly called to the mate and told him to bring the ship to an anchor at once. On going below I found my wife about to be confined, and shortly afterwards my first-born came into the world. It was a hard time for me, my ship being almost in a sinking condition, but thanks to our splendid nurse, I was able to go on shore and secure coolies to come off and keep the pumps going all night, and also to arrange for discharging the cargo.

The next duty was to petition the Governor to be allowed to take my ship to the Dutch Navy Yard on the Island of Onrust, about five miles from Batavia, the only place where I could repair her to make her safe to perform the rest of the voyage. There were no docks to take her to, so we were obliged to heave her down. Batavia at that time was all Dutch, and no foreigner was permitted to do business there until after swearing allegiance to the Dutch Government. The house of Peele, Hubbell & Co. was supposed to be an American house, but Mr. Cramerus, who was the head, was a born Dutchman, though he acted as American Consul. He was a very fine man and did everything to help me. There were two Americans in the house, but they had sworn allegiance to the Dutch Government and were practically Dutchmen. There

were some English merchants, but they were all in the same boat, naturalized Dutchmen.

At the end of a week I had to remove my wife on shore, and we took board with Mrs. Baines, who kept a very nice house some little distance from the city proper, where we were very comfortable; the rooms were very large and airy and we did not feel the heat at any time. My passengers were boarded at the hotel.

After discharging the cargo and ballast, the ship was towed over to Onrust, to the Navy Yard. It was a very difficult job to heave her down so as to get the keel out of water, but on getting her down the first time, a piece of coral nearly two feet in diameter fell out of her wood ends. If this had come out at sea the ship would have gone down in less than an hour. Another providential escape for me. The Dutch Navy officers were very particular, and would have the ship righted every night, which made a very long job of it, as it took three or four hours in the morning to heave her down. I lived in Batavia, and had to leave at daylight to take the land breeze to carry me to Onrust where I took breakfast on shore, where the mates, steward and men were living.

About a month after we arrived, Captain Darling and his wife invited us to spend a short time with them on their sugar plantation at Wanisippee, forty miles from Batavia. They were Boston people and very pleasant, and as work had progressed on the ship so that I could leave, and my wife and child were doing well, we accepted, and one fine morning a carriage, or stage, appeared at our boarding place with eight horses and driver and two outriders, all Javanese. The horses were not much larger than Shetland ponies, but they could run. Myself, wife, nurse and baby got on board, the driver snapped his



whip, the outriders ran on each side, whipping the horses to a run, and away we went, over a wide macadamized road as smooth as a floor, with tall trees on each side. It was exhilarating with the fresh morning air and the rapid run of the horses. The outriders, after getting them up to full speed jumped up behind, but at the least stoppage, jumped off and whipped them again. We ran these horses for eight miles, when they were taken out and eight fresh ones, all ready harnessed, were put in, and away we went again. It took five relays of eight horses to carry us the forty miles in about four hours. We then left the stage and were put on board of a flat-boat which carried us about four miles up to the landing at the plantation, where Captain Darling and his wife met us, and escorted us to their home, a large, roomy house with verandas around the whole building. At night we sat outside. The floor had holes in it, and the natives built fires underneath with wood of some peculiar smell and much smoke, to keep the mosquitoes off. For some time we were uneasy on account of the great number of lizards on the roof overhead, which very often dropped their tails off, but we soon got used to that.

While we were there the natives were grinding the sugar cane, and we had a good view of sugar making. They can do nothing with the molasses, so have to run it into the river. A small part of it is made into Arrack, a species of rum, but the greater part goes to waste, as it costs too much for transportation to ship it.

The Darlings lived well, and almost everything was cooked with the milk of the green cocoanut; the curries were especially delicious, and the fruit was plentiful. There were bananas of all sorts of flavors (seventy varieties in Java), but the mangosteen is the finest fruit in the world.



Next to that is the durian, but we could not get courage enough to eat it while we were in Java; the odor of it is very offensive; you can smell it half a mile off. Having once tasted it, you do not smell it.

After a very pleasant visit we were taken back to our boarding house in the same way as we came. The ship, having been repaired, was towed back to Batavia to reload and then nearly the whole of my crew were taken with Java fever which is similar to yellow fever, and all had to be sent to the hospital. Sometime before we were ready for sea, Mr. Cramerus, the American consul, and the two Mr. Reeds very privately told me that they wished me to take home an American gentleman who was confined in prison and whom the Governor and his Council intended to hang.

This Mr. Gibson was a New York adventurer who had read of the doings of Sir James Brooks, who had gone to Borneo and become Rajah of Sarawak and was supported by the English Government; did much for the natives and became a powerful Rajah, living in great state and becoming very wealthy. Gibson bought a pilot boat in New York and started for the Java Sea. He reached a point in Sumatra, and though it was under the Dutch Government he landed and had an interview with one of the Rajahs, promising him the support of the whole navy of the United States if he would revolt against the Dutch and make him (Gibson) Rajah supreme. But the Dutch heard of it and caught the mate of Gibson's schooner with a letter incriminating Gibson as he was going to the Rajah. Whereupon the schooner was seized and Captain Gibson and his mate were taken to Batavia and placed in prison for treason against the Dutch Government. According to all reports, Gibson, while in jail, had learned the Dutch

and Javanese languages, had been tried three times, plead his own cause, and had been acquitted by the Dutch courts, but the Governor and Council were satisfied of his guilt and were determined he should be hanged. I went to see him in prison and took quite a liking to him. He was a very able man, and did not worry at all, for all that his life was in danger. There was no American man-of-war anywhere near Java, and I made up my mind that if he could be got out of prison I would take him on board my ship and save him if I could.

Two weeks or more before I was ready for sea, the American ship *Sumatra*, Captain Silver, put into Batavia in distress. The Captain called a survey upon her and she was found unseaworthy and it was recommended by the surveyors to sell her. She had a good crew, all well, and I shipped them to go to New York with me. My own men were dying in the hospital and none of them were likely to get well enough to be taken on board. As soon as we were ready, arrangements were made to get Gibson out of prison. Two Englishmen who kept a ship-chandler's store promised to have him at the end of the jetty at nine P.M. of the evening of the twenty-fifth of April, the night I was going to sail. I had my wife and all our traps on board, and we had been just three months in Batavia when everything was ready for a start. I sent my mate with the ship's boat on shore, and soon she came back with Gibson on board. The Dutch frigate, a guard ship, lay a very short distance from us, and we had hardly got him on board when she sent a boat to us. We supposed they were after the prisoner and we hustled him under the mate's room in a hurry. But it was only a few officers who had come to say good bye to me, for I had seen the Captain often on shore and we were good friends.

They left us after a short stay, and at three A.M. we got under weigh to take advantage of the land breeze which was a fair wind, out of the harbor. As soon as the anchor was aweigh I fired a salute of eleven guns to the Dutch frigate; they called their crew and returned the salute. Our guns were then run in and we paid no more attention to the frigate or to the shore; but Mr. Gibson, on reaching New York, wrote a book in which he stated that the sailors stood by the guns, ready to fight any vessel that should attempt to recapture him. His rescue came near costing the ship dear. On discharging the cargo to have the ship repaired, we had to pay duties, which were to be returned when it was taken on board again. This duty the Government refused to refund, as the ship had taken away a State prisoner; and it was some months before the owners of the ship recovered it. Besides, I was also forbidden to ever visit the Island of Java—the *ship* might go to Batavia, but not under my command.

Many of my friends wanted me to register my son as born in Batavia, and make him a Dutchman, as he would have great privileges when he grew up; but I told them he was born under the American flag, and was and always would be, an American citizen.

We had a tedious time beating out through Sunda Straits, and for thirteen days had light winds and calms. On the fourth of May we exchanged signals with the *Samuel Russell*, my old ship, and for two days we were in company, with light winds. We parted with one another by my going to the west and the *Russell* to the south. Quite a large number of my crew were down with the Java fever, but I lost only one man, Hamilton Rea, the sailmaker, who died on the thirtieth of May. I was especially sorry to lose him as he had been sailmaker on

board the *Horatio* when I made my first voyage; he was a regular old salt, always at work, and he took as much interest in the ship and its passage as any one. The rest of the crew gradually were restored to health, and when we passed Cape of Good Hope all were well. We had a pleasant passage from the Cape and took a pilot off Barne-gat the twenty-fifth of July, 1853, after being absent fourteen months and two days, a good, long wedding tour.

After discharging the ship I went with my wife and Charley to South Danvers, where we were joyfully received by my wife's mother and her other relations and friends, and our baby boy pronounced the finest and handsomest baby ever born. We had a very pleasant time, but my good ship must be off again, and after a little over two months on shore, I persuaded my wife to join me in another voyage around the world. Also I had the owners' permission to take her mother with us.

On September twenty-seventh we left New York with a full cargo and a few passengers for San Francisco. We had variable winds and calms and were thirty-two days out before crossing the equator, the longest passage I had ever had; from there we had a fair passage, passing through the straits of Le Maire at midnight, and on the sixtieth day out passing Cape Horn. We saw many icebergs, some of them very beautiful in the sunlight. For fifteen days we had nothing but storm with snow and hail and cold weather. My wife and her mother stood the discomfort wonderfully well; but we were glad enough to reach San Francisco after a passage of one hundred and twenty-one days, arriving on January twenty-sixth, 1854.

My cousin, C. Adolphe Low, met us as we came to the wharf, and it was very pleasant to see many friends; it was like getting home. We lived on board ship and had

daily visitors and some one to dine with us. The cargo was hurried out by stevedore Allen and in eighteen days we were ready for sea. I had much difficulty in securing a crew; in fact I could not get a crew for China, so I had to ship them by the run to Honolulu and trust to finding men there to take me to China.

We left San Francisco on February thirteenth and took a pilot off Honolulu February twenty-fourth, ten days from San Francisco, a very short passage, averaging over two hundred miles a day. After taking the pilot we went into the harbor and hauled alongside the wharf. Upon inquiry I found it was impossible to get a crew of white men, or even Kanakas, or Sandwich Islanders, as in the case of the *Samuel Russell*. They wanted very high wages and I had to enter into heavy bonds to return them to the Islands. I was in a quandary, when fortunately a New Bedford man offered to load the ship for New York with whale oil. This gave the ship a very fair freight, and he promised to secure a crew for me from among the whalers. I concluded to take his offer.

When at Honolulu in the *Samuel Russell* I had invited King Kamahameha and his princes to dine with me, so now I invited them again, but I found that if they accepted, my wife and her mother could not join us at dinner, which disappointed them very much. When my visitors arrived at the ship I received the King at the gangway, and he recognized me at once and seemed very glad to see me, although it was three years since I had met him before. We had a good dinner and the King and his suite were very much pleased with the entertainment and delighted with the ship, which he pronounced the finest one that ever came into Honolulu. Before they left I introduced them to my wife and her mother, and Mrs. Low invited the

Queen and her ladies to dine with her the next day. The King accepted the invitation and promised her that they would come. Of course I was shut out, and I gave the ship up to the ladies. I forget how many made their appearance, but they also enjoyed their visit. Before the dinner was over, the King and two or three of his ministers came on board and had liquid refreshments served on the quarter deck.

After this was over I had to go to Lahaina, some distance from Honolulu, where a great many whale ships anchored in preference to Honolulu. Father Damon, seaman's chaplain and missionary, invited my wife and mother to pay a visit on shore during my absence. They accepted, and after seeing them settled, I took passage in a small trading schooner for Lahaina. I found on arrival there a number of ships and I secured quite a large quantity of oil. Captain Dubois got under weigh in his barque as soon as I was ready, and took me on board to go back to Honolulu. On the way up he gave me a thrilling account of having been attacked by a whale in the South Pacific and his ship sunk by it, so that he and his crew had a narrow escape. They took to their boats and were picked up by Captain Edwards of the ship *Washington* of New Bedford. It is so long ago now that I have forgotten the details.

We were nearly two months completing our cargo and on the twenty-second of April we were ready for sea. We had a cabinful of passengers. Mr. Marshall and wife, Mr. Everett and wife, Mrs. Angel and son (wife of the U. S. Consul), Mr. Saunders, who was nearly dead of consumption and anxious to get home and see his mother before he died, Captain Snow, an old whaler, and Mr. and Mrs. Whittlesy, missionaries, also my wife and her mother



and my son Charles, and some others whom I have forgotten, but they were all first class and full of fun.

We left Honolulu with moderate breezes on April twenty-third, had good winds, and crossed the line in six days; passed Cape Horn in thirty-eight days with skysails and royal studding-sails set. In fifty-seven days we crossed the line in the Atlantic, a splendid passage. We were ten days ahead of the famous voyage of the *Sovereign of the Seas*, but we had a long passage of twenty-five days from the line, being becalmed for many days.

Mr. Saunders' will had kept him alive so far, as we hoped to reach his home, but on the Fourth of July he enquired of his servant if there was any wind. The man told him, "No, and no sign of any," and he turned over and died. We had made preparations to celebrate the day, but we gave them up. The voyage up to this time was the most pleasant of any I had ever made; the passengers had some amusement every day or evening, and getting along so fast put every one in good humor.

After we took a pilot, just as we were going by Sandy Hook, my second son was born, on the fourteenth day of July, 1854. It was exciting and rather unfortunate to have it occur so near New York, but everything went all right. At quarantine the Doctor came on board and pronounced my wife doing well. It was nearly seven P.M. when we hauled alongside the wharf, and we had to remain on board all night. The next day we removed my wife to the home of my parents, 40 Concord Street, Brooklyn. I left the ship and gave Mr. Frisbee command, as I intended staying at home for some time.

After my wife was able to travel, we went to South Danvers, where I purchased a large house on the corner of Foster and Washington streets. It had been built by



a Colonel Lowe. It was beautifully situated on a knoll, some fifteen feet above the street and a block below where George Peabody was born. We had a pleasant time setting out trees and plants and beautifying the grounds.

In the middle of August, 1855, I was called to take charge again of the *N. B. Palmer*, then loading for China, and on the twenty-eighth I bade farewell to home and proceeded to sea. For five days we had a good run and I anticipated a short run to the equator, but afterwards we had light winds and calms and did not cross the line till the thirty-first day out. We passed the longitude of Cape of Good Hope in  $40^{\circ}$  south, fifty-seven days from New York. From there we had varying winds to Sandalwood Island, then light airs and calms for twenty days, and we took a pilot on the twenty-fourth of December, one hundred and eighteen days to Hong Kong, the longest passage I ever made. The twelfth of January, 1856 we proceeded to Shanghai and made a good passage against the monsoon in eleven days, heavily laden with rice. After a stay of six weeks we were loaded with tea and silks and on March the twelfth got under weigh and proceeded down the river. We had very light winds and were twenty-five days getting to Anjer and sixty days to the Cape of Good Hope. We stopped at St. Helena for flour and provisions, and arrived in New York on the twenty-eighth of June, 1856, in one hundred and eight days from Shanghai.

As my wife had been on shore for some time and our two boys were old enough to leave with their grandmother, my wife consented to go to sea with me again, and on the fourth of August, 1856, we sailed in the *N. B. Palmer* for China. We had a few pleasant passengers, one a Mrs. Hunter whose husband was partner in Russell & Co. at

Canton. She was a Southern lady and most agreeable, and my wife enjoyed her being on board, and the voyage, which was made tedious by light winds, was much shortened by her company. We were thirty-five days to the equator and had light winds to  $30^{\circ}$  south latitude, where we had a fine run past the Cape of Good Hope and another fine run from  $6^{\circ}$  east in latitude  $40^{\circ}$  south to  $7^{\circ}$  south latitude and  $103^{\circ}$  east, averaging three hundred and thirty-five miles a day for four days, and two hundred and eighty-eight miles a day for twelve days. It is very seldom that one can get the wind to make such a run and we made a fair passage to Anjer, being eighty days from New York. We took the passage through the Java Sea and through the Celebes Sea into the Pacific Ocean. Two days after passing Cape Donda, a long way from land, we picked up a canoe with a Malay in it who was nearly starved. I took him on board and carried him to Hong Kong. I could not find out anything about him for he could not speak any language that I was acquainted with.

Light winds continued till we took the northeast monsoon in latitude  $76^{\circ}$  north, longitude  $126^{\circ} 50''$  east. In three days we passed Pedro Blanco and anchored in Hong Kong at six A.M., one hundred and eighteen days from New York. We lay at anchor from November thirtieth, 1856, till February nineteenth, 1857, when we started for Siam for a load of rice. There being a famine in China, every available ship was sent to different places for rice. After a passage of twelve days we came to anchor off the bar at Siam, about four miles from land. I had my long boat rigged as a yawl with two leg sails, and proceeded up the river Menam forty miles from the anchorage, to Bangkok, the capital, where I found a Mr. Parker to whom I consigned the ship. Here I met Mr.

and Mrs. Telford and they invited me to bring my wife up and stay with them till the ship was loaded. I accepted their invitation and then returned to the ship, enjoying much the very pleasant sail. I went to Bangkok again the next day with my wife, taking the second mate and some sailors to pull the boat in case the wind gave out, but there was a breeze and we made good time, and after giving the men a good feed, we sent them back to the ship. I expected to be three or four weeks in loading.

Bangkok is full of temples filled with idols of every size. One reclines on its back; is some fifty feet long and fifty feet high and all covered with gold; another immense one is in a sitting posture, and some temples contain one or two hundred idols around the room. The river on both sides of Bangkok is lined with houses built on large rafts of bamboo, anchored there. When a family gets tired of one place they up anchor and float down or up the river to a new place. Thunder storms occur here almost every night with vivid lightning, heavy thunder and torrents of rain. The days are very pleasant, but not hot. My wife had an invitation to attend a pleasant party given by the Queen on her birthday, to which all the missionary ladies went. At the close of the dinner the Queen presented each lady with a silver coin called a tical, value about fifty cents. The first King, for there were two, did not speak English, and he kept aloof from foreigners, but the second King was an educated man and was very fond of astronomy and navigation, and was very progressive. He was also a great beggar and wanted everything he saw that pleased him. He visited my ship and was much pleased with her. I was glad I was not on board at the time, for the mate had hard work to

convince him that two very handsome nine-pounder guns were ship's property and not to be given away. He afterwards tried very hard to get them from me.

Once in a while, my wife accompanied me down to the ship when my boat came up for orders, and one time we had a rather disagreeable trip, for in going back to the city we took passage in a small schooner called the *Red Wing*. She was not much larger than my long boat and carried rice and sapan-wood to the ship. We started off very well, but on the bar the schooner struck, and there we were and had to stay till the tide rose. It was very hot and we retreated to the hold to keep cool. We were too far from the ship for any one there to see and help us and the hold was not a pleasant place to stay in, as there were any quantity of centipedes and scorpions which came out of the sapan-wood. We were soon delivered though, by the tide's rising and we went on our way rejoicing and arrived safely at Bangkok.

It was here that my wife and I learned to love the durian. We were in Java three months, the home of this delicious fruit, but we could not then be persuaded to touch it, for the smell of it is very offensive. But Mr. and Mrs. Telford insisted that if we once tasted of it we should not notice the smell again, and we did taste and were sorry we had lost so many opportunities of enjoying it. It is a large fruit with a husk one-half to one inch thick; inside there are some dozen seeds the size of a dollar, and a thick coating around them of a substance like a custard which is eaten with a spoon. I cannot describe it, but it tastes like everything that is good mixed together. They told us in Java that it was very heating, and the natives, when they eat of it, sit with their feet in the water, but we were never troubled by it. The maugosteen is another

most delicious fruit and common in Java and Siam. I cannot describe that either.

The King had a very large number of elephants, among them two white elephants which were held sacred. You could not, however, properly call them white for they were more of a dirty cream color. The keepers took the whole lot of them down to the river every morning to bathe, and it was very amusing to see their evident enjoyment of it.

There are large dealings here in teak-wood which is very rare, and I bought quite a quantity for a deck load. Sapan-wood also we purchased for dunnage, lining the ship inside with it to keep the rice from the ship's side. We loaded as rapidly as was possible with the ship so far away (for everything had to be transported in lighters), but on the thirtieth of March we had twenty-one thousand pecals of rice on board which gave us about fourteen hundred tons, besides teak-wood and sapan-wood, which put us down very deep in the water.

We bade good-bye to our hosts as well as to all the missionaries, and started down the river, and at nine A.M., March thirty-first we got under weigh for Hong Kong. We had light winds all the way and were twenty-one days to Hong Kong, averaging only eighty miles a day. Here we discharged our cargo and on the fourteenth of May set sail on our second voyage to Siam. As the ship was making money for the owners and the voyage was pleasant, my wife and I were well contented. The winds were very light and a long passage of eighteen days was the result. We anchored off the Menambar on the first of June, 1857. The *Portsmouth*, American man-of-war, was anchored near us. She was commanded by Captain Foote, who distinguished himself at the battle of the Barrier Forts

near Canton, and afterwards in our civil war in many fights on the Mississippi River and at New Orleans. We made his acquaintance in China and liked him very much.

As soon as the ship was anchored I left for Bangkok to report, and meeting Mr. and Mrs. Telford received another kind invitation to stay with them during the ship's loading. I accepted for myself and wife and later we started in the long boat for the city. We were becalmed in the river and were making slow progress, when a steamer flying the Siamese flag hove in sight, bound up. It came close to us and stopped, and Captain Foote hailed me and asked us to come on board. The King and second King were on board and the boat belonged to the Kings, a very pretty vessel called *The Royal Seat of the Siamese Forces*, a pretty long name. The Kings had been the guests of Captain Foote on board the *Portsmouth*. We were glad to go on board and to be very graciously received by their Majesties. We were soon landed in Bangkok and settled in the old missionary home. We were fortunate to have such a good home, for it was very tedious work getting a cargo, and we lay there two months before we were loaded. We took in the usual load of sapan-wood for dunnage and teak-wood for a deck load, and some fourteen hundred tons of rice. About two weeks before we were ready for sea I was taken sick with dysentery of the worst kind, and in a week I was reduced from one hundred and eighty pounds to one hundred and twenty. I recovered somewhat and was able to take charge of my ship, leaving Siam on the thirtieth of July and arriving in Hong Kong the tenth of August, where I had a relapse and was dangerously sick, so sick indeed that the doctor in Hong Kong did not expect me to live and sent me over to Macao,



forty miles to the westward. There Dr. Caine, an English doctor, attended me and he I think never expected me to get well. All this time my wife attended me night and day, and I am sure that by her constant care and good nursing my life was saved; the Doctor said as much.

All at once the crisis was passed and I progressed wonderfully towards health and strength. I was in the summer house of Russell & Co., a fine building, with plenty of room, and there I had every attention that could possibly be given to me. Captain Steele of the *Contest* was there and many others who were very kind to me. As soon as I received strength to move about we had a very pleasant time. Macao is a Portuguese city and beautifully situated on the Bay; it has an inside harbor that is well protected from all winds, but large vessels cannot enter it. Before Hong Kong became an English port all ships stopped at Macao and waited for orders before going up the river to Canton. We stayed in Macao till I was quite well, and as we were not to leave for home for two months I was better off away from the ship.

But the time soon passed and I joined the ship, and on the fifth of October we left for home, and glad enough we were. I was not very strong, though able to take care of the ship, but the voyage down the China Sea was very trying, with light airs and baffling winds, so that we were thirty days going to Anjer. When we left there I had lost some of the flesh and strength which I had gained, and was very poorly. However, with the fresh ocean winds and bracing weather I soon gained, and I continued to gain all the way home.

The passage was pleasant, with nothing occurring to remember, except that it was a short one of seventy days from Anjer to New York. We took a pilot at four A.M.



of the thirteenth of January, 1858, and at seven P.M. anchored inside the bar. At daylight we took a steam tug for New York, after an absence of seventeen months and seventeen days. My friends thought I looked like a very sick man and advised me to stay at home for a year and recruit. I found that my weight was thirty pounds less than my average weight of one hundred and eighty, so my brothers gave the command to Mr. Hyam, the mate, a very able man, who had been my chief officer for two years, and I went to South Danvers to my home there, where I found all well. Our two sons, Charley and Josiah had been well cared for by their grandmother and had grown to be good-sized boys. I gained strength daily, but not much flesh.

On the ninth of March my wife was delivered of twins, a boy and a girl. There was a terrible snow storm and I had to foot it a mile through two feet of snow to get the Doctor. We named them Francis and Frances, and they were fine children. In July we started with the whole family for Claremont, New Hampshire, and took board in the town. It was very lovely there but the food could have been better (and it might have been worse). I had an unquenchable thirst for milk. I dare not say how much I drank in the twenty-four hours, but it was certainly from one to two gallons if not more. At any rate I gained in flesh and strength rapidly; so did Mrs. Low and the children, and after a month or two we returned to our home in South Danvers where we remained the rest of the year until I began to want to go to sea again. Of course I had got to go alone for my wife could not go and leave the children.

A. A. Low & Bros. wrote me in January that the *Jacob Bell* was nearly ready for sea and that I could take com-

mand of her. She was a fine ship, of the same size as the *N. B. Palmer*, but she did not have as fine accommodations. Instead of there being a house on deck, half of it was below the poop deck and half above it. The state-rooms were very comfortable and my room was in the after part, with a gangway which opened out close to the man at the wheel and also opened out on the main deck. The quarter-deck was, of course, small, about three feet wide on each side of the house, and some twelve feet abaft. The top of the cabin gave good room to walk on, and altogether it was very comfortable. I had a New Bedford man as mate and Joseph Steele as second mate. The mate proved perfectly worthless on a merchant ship, though he may have been a good whaler, for as such he had been brought up. I discharged him in Hong Kong as soon as I arrived and promoted Mr. Steele.

On leaving New York we had fresh gales from south and southwest and unfavorable winds till we crossed the latitude of  $30^{\circ}$  north. We crossed the line in twenty-seven days from New York. On the twenty-second day of February we fired a salute in memory of Washington's birthday. A seaman, William Dexter, was badly injured by the guns going off while he was ramming home a cartridge. I sewed the thumb together, which was nearly off the hand, and he recovered the use of it before the end of the voyage, a tribute to my skill as a surgeon. Nothing occurred to make the voyage of interest. We arrived at Anjer in eighty-three days from New York and from there to Hong Kong had a most tedious time, nothing but light winds and calms, and we were thirty-one days from Anjer, making the voyage one hundred and fourteen days. We lay in Hong Kong from May thirteenth to June eighth, when we set sail for Foochow. We were three days

to the White Dogs off the River Min, and it took us seven days to reach Pagoda Anchorage, our destination. Foo-chow is some distance from the anchorage (some fourteen miles), about the same as from Whampoa to Canton, and the teas are brought down to the ship in the same way, by chop-boats carrying from eight hundred to one thousand chests of tea.

There were a number of American ships in the river when we arrived, and as I was the oldest Captain in the China trade I was made Commodore of the Fleet. The Commodore's duty was to fire a gun at eight A.M. and at sundown, at the same time hoisting the ensign at the peak and the house flag at the main. All other American ships had to follow the Commodore's example. It was his duty also, when an American ship made its appearance down the river, to signal the fleet to send a boat's crew on board to help moor ship and furl her sails when she came near. The same was done when one of the number got under weigh to leave port. It was a very good scheme and made easy work for the crew coming in or going out. We had some sport annoying the Captain of an English brig-of-war which lay very near to us. Of course when a man-of-war was in port she acted as Commodore for the ships under her flag, and my mate took great pleasure in watching when this ship would fire the eight o'clock gun and in firing his almost at the same second. The English Captain did not like it at all, but he was a pompous, uncivil chap whom no one liked, and we were glad we got the better of him. One night a typhoon threatened, and at one A.M. we called all hands and sent down skysail, royal and topgallant yards and housed the topgallant masts. At daylight it was blowing heavily and my ship was lying comfortably, all snug. The man-of-war started in and

made all things snug in a short time, but the Captain never could get over wondering how the Yankee captain had done such a job in the darkness of night.

We lay at the Pagoda Anchorage two months and eight days, and even after all that time we were unable to get a full cargo for New York, and much to my disappointment, we were ordered to sail for Whampoa to finish our cargo for home. This being the height of the typhoon season I did not like cruising in Chinese waters, but there was no getting out of it.

Upon leaving, a young man named Stephen Massett wished me to take him to New York as a passenger. He was poor and could only pay his passage by giving me an upright piano, which I took in the after cabin. He was the son of Stephen Massett, an actor and humorist of some note and he inherited his father's musical and humorous ability and we had many a pleasant time on the voyage home. We left our anchorage on the twenty-fourth of August, 1859, and on the third day out we were running into a typhoon. A fresh gale was increasing, with the barometer falling. I sent the royal yards on deck and close-reefed the topsails, furled mainsail, jib and foresail, and ran away from the centre of the typhoon by steering according to the law of storms. I then hove to and let the storm pass us to the northward.

On the thirty-first of August we took a pilot and at three P.M. anchored in Hong Kong, seven days from Foochow. We at once proceeded to Whampoa to finish our lading, but instead of being able to do so immediately, we had to wait six weeks before we finished loading, and it was on the thirteenth of October when we passed the Great Ladrone Islands bound home. It was early for the northeast monsoon, so we had light and baffling winds

down the China Sea and were twenty-seven days to Anjer. We had a fair run to Cape of Good Hope, passing it fifteen miles to the south, in sixty-six days from China. We had the usual run to New York and took a pilot one hundred and two days from Macao. This concluded my twenty-second voyage and sixteenth voyage as Captain.

I found the family all well and my oldest boys well grown, and my old ship the *N. B. Palmer* loading for China, so I shifted from the *Jacob Bell* and took command of the *N. B. Palmer*, and after a short stay at my home in South Danvers, made arrangements to take my wife and my sons Charles and Josiah with me. My cousin, Miss Ellen Porter, was also to go with us, making quite a family party. We left Frank and Fannie with Mrs. Tucker, and on February fifth, a little over a month from the time I arrived home, I was again at sea, bound to China.

There was very little worth remembering of this voyage out. Light winds prevailed and we were twenty-four days to the equator, and were directly on the line at noon the twenty-fourth day. We had the usual heavy seas and strong winds running down the easting in the Indian Ocean, and made a fair passage of eighty-two days to Anjer. We lay there all night and next day, taking in water and fresh provisions, turtles, chickens and yams, and enjoyed a short time on shore. We had light winds all the way up the China Sea, and on the fourth of June, just one hundred days from New York, we anchored in Hong Kong. We had been there fifteen days when I was ordered to Shanghai. We made the passage in eight days, coming to anchor on the second of July in that port. As there was no cargo to be had there we loaded up with bean cake for Amoy.

Before leaving New York I swapped the upright piano I received from Massett for a splendid square one made by Stohls, which he let me have for three hundred dollars and the upright. It was one of his best, worth seven hundred dollars. He wished me to take it to China as an advertisement. My wife enjoyed it exceedingly, and it was a great source of pleasure when we had company at the different places we visited, and also at sea. I did not, however, have the pleasure of selling any pianos for the maker.

We had a short run of three days and anchored in Amoy on August first, 1860, and were consigned to Tait & Co. Mr. Tait, the senior member of the firm, was a rough old Scotchman and rather eccentric, but a jolly fellow and we saw a good deal of him on shore and on board the ship. There were quite a number of young men in Amoy, and my cousin had numerous visitors, for young ladies were scarce in that community.

One day we were invited to dine at Tait & Co.'s. It is needless to add that we had a fine dinner, for the foreign merchants in all of China lived like princes, and there is no country where the variety of foods is greater or better than in China. One course Mr. Tait pronounced chicken-pie. My wife and cousin thought it excellent, but after dinner was over we found it was made of frog's legs. Neither of us had ever tasted them before, but afterwards we had them often on board ship.

The harbor of Amoy was a very safe one, land locked, and more like a river, for on one side was the main land, and some two miles opposite was an island running parallel, named Kulang-seu. The American Consul and some missionaries lived there, but the merchants were on the main land. Some three or four miles towards the sea



there was a fine, hard, sandy beach where the foreigners went to ride on the Amoy ponies in the afternoons. Captain Wood, captain of a ship near us, invited us one day to go down there and have a ride. We went in our Sampan and took my steward with a lunch while Captain Wood found the horses and had them sent down there. Although I had never ridden horseback I got along very well and rather enjoyed it. We went several times, but one day I could get no pony, so I called at Tait & Co.'s. and Mr. Hancock offered me his and said he would send it down and have it ready for me. As usual we went at about three o'clock in the afternoon and found the horses ready. Captain Wood and the ladies started off in good style and I mounted in perfect confidence, but my pony refused to go ahead and instead went sideways towards a low mud fort, just above the beach, and squeezed me against the side of it. All at once he made a bolt and went off on the run, but a little rivulet of water was running across the beach, and just as he got to it he stopped very suddenly. I, however, kept going until I struck the sand, which luckily for me was very soft. I came to the conclusion that I would not ride any more and I took the horse, which was standing perfectly still, and went back to my boat, and told the steward to take him and go after the party and tell them I would not ride any more. I believe that was the last time I ever rode horseback. I found afterwards that the pony had not been ridden for over two months.

We were in Amoy for two months and during that time the ship was visited daily by many young men, and though my cousin had been in Hong Kong and Shanghai without meeting any one who pleased her, it looked very much as though Amoy would furnish the right man. There were

two who were very attentive—a Mr. Richardson and a Mr. Hancock—and it was very doubtful which was the favored one.

But the time of our leaving was at hand. We were loaded with tea for New York, and I was busy dropping the ship through the fleet, and did not come to anchor till near eleven P.M. Then I was told that Mr. Richardson had proposed and had been accepted. He wished my cousin to stay and be married then, but I would not consent. I told him she must go home first; and they parted. We left for New York the next day.

Nothing particular happened on our voyage home, which we made in hundred one and eight days from Amoy, arriving in New York January fifteenth, 1861. We were in New York for two months and a half, a good part of which time I spent in South Danvers.

There was quite a difference of opinion in the family circle about my cousin Miss Porter's going to China to marry Mr. Richardson. Some favored it; some were very much against it, but I guaranteed his good character and carried the day, and it was resolved that she go out with me and my wife again and take the chances. I told my mother-in-law she had been faithful over a few things and I would make her ruler over many, so I left all four of my children with her, to take care of during my absence, and my wife and I, and my cousin, on the fourth of April, 1861, set sail again for China.

For the first five days we had very heavy weather, but after that the usual kind, and we made a good passage to the equator, of twenty days. In forty-nine days we passed the meridian of Cape of Good Hope; running down our easting we had a continuation of heavy gales, and cold, unpleasant weather. On the seventy-fifth day

we made Christmas Island and on the seventy-eighth day anchored in Anjer. The big comet had been growing brighter and brighter till it was a magnificent sight. We had light winds all the way up the China Sea, but the night of July ninth there was a change, the barometer falling and wind increasing, so I sent down the skysail and royal yards, and put the ship under close-reefed topsails. The storm grew worse at midnight and I hove the ship to and waited for a typhoon to pass to the northward. This was my third experience of success in clearing out from a hurricane by heeding the law of storms. After the storm was over we made sail and reached Hong Kong on the evening of the eleventh of July, ninety-seven days from New York. It had been a very trying week to all of us, especially to my cousin, who was worrying for fear that Mr. Richardson would not be on hand to meet her. But her mind was now relieved, for as soon as our anchor was down he came on board, the first one. Of course we were all happy in being thus assured that he was true and ready to fulfil his engagement. As he had to return to his business at Amoy the wedding was hastened, and after a short time he was married to my cousin in the Episcopal Church in Hong Kong, and with his bride left for Amoy. We were very sorry to part with my cousin, for she was a very lovely girl.

After many weeks in Hong Kong, and still no prospect of loading tea for New York, Smith, Archer & Co. concluded to send the ship to San Francisco with a load of Chinese coolies. There was a great demand for ships to carry them and it was a money-making voyage. The ship was measured and we were allowed to carry four hundred. It took quite a long time to fit her out for this new trade; bunks had to be built in the between-decks, furnaces put

on deck for cooking, and quite a large house on deck for stores, and a great many extra water tanks and casks. But we had seventy-five dollars for each Chinaman, making nearly thirty thousand dollars for passage money, besides freight money, and there were several passengers in the cabin.

On the sixteenth of September all was ready and we got under weigh with a light wind from the east, and proceeded to sea. The fourth day out the wind hauled to the north, blowing fresh with falling barometer, showing that a typhoon was coming from the east and that I was just in front of it. September twenty-first, took in everything but the lower topsails and kept off south by east to clear the centre of the storm. At three P.M. took in the main topsail and lay to on the port tack. The wind was blowing very heavily with torrents of rain, and very high, confused sea. At eight P.M. the wind hauled to the west, which showed me to be on the southern edge of the storm, and the wind being fair, I kept the ship away due east and ran along the edge of the typhoon. Soon the wind began to moderate and we made sail.

On the first of October the mate reported to me that one of the fresh-water tanks had sprung a leak and that we had lost over two thousand gallons of water, so I made up my mind to go into Yokohama and secure more water casks. My wife and the passengers were glad to hear it and made all sorts of plans as to what they would do, but they were doomed to disappointment, for after our beating about the Bay of Yeddo for two days the wind came on to blow a gale from the north, with much rain, and I kept the ship away for San Francisco, with all my water casks filled. We had a very stormy passage with lots of rain, so that on arriving in San Francisco we still

had all our water casks filled, notwithstanding the large quantity of water we used daily. On the thirtieth of October we made the land at eight P.M., took a pilot inside the Farallones, and at midnight came to anchor in San Francisco Bay, forty-five days from Hong Kong. We did not lose a Chinaman, but brought them all safely to their destination. They gave us no trouble, kept very quiet, smoking and sleeping and eating, and were the best kind of passengers.

We were detained in San Francisco till the twenty-eighth of November. It was very tedious waiting for a crew, as men were unwilling to make a long voyage. At last, on the twenty-ninth of November we were towed to sea by the tug boat *Columbus* and at noon took our departure from Point Bonita, six miles distant, with light breeze and rain. The light winds continued and it was the twenty-first day out that I hove to off Honolulu. I went on shore and Father Damon came off to see my wife, as I had no intention of stopping. At five P.M. we filled away; had light winds for the next eighteen days and then strong winds from north northwest to southwest. On the twenty-fourth of January we sighted Claro Babuyan and Richmond Islands and on the twenty-sixth at eight A.M. came to anchor in Manila Bay, fifty-eight days from San Francisco, a very long passage.

My wife and I went on shore to Peele, Hubbell & Co. (agents of Messrs. A. A. Low & Bros.), met many old friends and enjoyed the change from ship to shore life. There had been a heavy earthquake a few days before we arrived, which we had felt at sea, though at the time we were uncertain about it. The walls of Peele, Hubbell & Co.'s house were badly cracked, and much of the Cathedral wall was tumbled down, and the whole city

showed how severe the shock had been, but there was no recurrence of the tremor and we were not at all alarmed.

In Manila, and in fact in all Spanish places, there are about three holidays in a week in which you can get no work done, so we were in the harbor a month getting half a cargo of hemp. But the time passed pleasantly. We had our carriage in the mornings, with a driver, and another in the afternoon, and it was very pleasant to go to the Esplanade and hear the band play and see the people, for all of the foreigners and also the Spanish community were there to show off every afternoon, and the weather was delightful. My wife bought some beautiful Piña handkerchiefs and scarfs made from the pineapple fibre. The material is very beautiful. She enjoyed eating the mango which is very fine in these islands, and the Guava jelly made there, which is also delicious.

But we could not get a full cargo there and had to go to China to fill up with teas and silks; so after a month we took our departure for Hong Kong, on the twenty-sixth of February, 1862, with light winds and fine weather. On the fourth of March we took a pilot, and at eight P.M. anchored off Green Island in the harbor of Hong Kong, six days from Manila; and after being in Hong Kong for some weeks got under weigh for Whampoa to finish loading for New York. I took my wife to Canton as usual, and we had a very pleasant time at Russell & Co.'s. There were many pleasant gentlemen in the various hong's, or merchant's houses; in fact old Canton "couldn't be beat" as a place of residence, while the best of living in the way of fish, flesh and fowl could be had very cheap and the Chinese cooks knew their business. With it all we were anxious to be on our way home, and were very



glad to know it when the last teas had gone to the ship and I could sign the bills of lading and settle up.

We had a few passengers on our return voyage, one of whom was Mrs. Parker, a very pleasant lady. Almost all the way home she played cribbage with my wife. I had a small table made for them which used to be placed somewhere in the shade, and soon after breakfast they sat down to the game and kept it up a long time every pleasant day. We left on the twentieth of April for New York, and all the way down the China Sea we had light winds. We anchored in Anjer on the fourteenth of May, twenty-five days from China. All the way across the Indian Ocean winds were light till we reached Madagascar, where we experienced some heavy gales.

We had not been able to get a white crew in China and had had to ship fifty Lascars, with a serang as captain, and two officers. They all worked together and all hands were called when there was anything to do. They made splendid sailors in warm weather and were like monkeys in going aloft. They lived on rice and dried fish, eating no pork or beef. They had a cook who made curry for them, fresh every day, and I had him make it for the cabin, it was so very nice. On July second we were off Agulhas Banks, very near the Cape of that name, and the wind died out. After breakfast I had the mate tie some fish hooks on the deep sea lead line, and bait them with salt pork and then throw it over to get soundings. On hauling it in we found every hook had a fine fish on it; we threw it again and caught more. It began to get exciting, and the Lascars went to fishing on their own hook and the fish were hauled in as fast as they could throw their lines. It was not necessary to let the line go to the bottom, for the fish had followed up to nearly the top of the water.

The ship was covered with blood and scales from the bows to the taffrail. We had Cape salmon, sea bass and Spanish mackerel, weighing from five to fifteen pounds apiece, and as we could not eat them all, the Lascars cleaned and salted them. We had to open several casks of salt beef and pork to get salt enough though the fish took but little. I was surprised to see how little, but there were over two hundred of them. They lasted us till we reached New York. The Lascars enjoyed them very much and so we all did; they were certainly as good fish as I ever tasted.

After an all day's ealm the wind was moderate from the west during the night, and then increased to a fresh gale which lasted for two days, when it moderated. At three P.M. of July sixth we made Cape of Good Hope, seventy-eight days from Hong Kong. For nine days after, we had the hardest luck I ever had, a suecession of calms and light head winds, and not till we reached latitude  $24^{\circ}$  south did we get the southeast trades. On the twentieth of July at four A.M. we made St. Helena and at eight A.M. came to anchor. My wife and the passengers hired carriages and we drove to Longwood to view the dwelling place of Napoleon; also visited his grave, which was empty, for his remains had been removed to France. Jamestown, where we landed, is rather a pleasant place, but the American Consul told me that all the wooden buildings were being eaten up by white ants, and showed me their work on his own house, the foundations of which were riddled and ready to let the house down. At nine P.M. we had finished taking in stores and got under weigh, with light southeast trades which continued moderate, and we crossed the line July thirty-first, one hundred and three days from Hong Kong. Light winds continued and on the twenty-sixth of August we took a pilot off Absecom

at two P.M., reaching New York at seven P.M., after the longest passage I ever made.

After a few days in New York I went to South Danvers with my wife and had a joyful reunion with her mother and the children. We had been away from home sixteen months, and Charles and Josiah had grown to be big boys, at any rate they thought they had. Frank and Fannie too were getting along fast. After six weeks at South Danvers I was again called to my ship, which was loading for China.

A steamer had been built in New York to be sent to China. She was set up and then taken apart, and the *N. B. Palmer* was to carry her. All the woodwork and all the machinery we got below decks, but the huge boilers were to be taken on deck. They weighed twenty tons each, and the main deck had to be shored up from the keelson, and the between-decks strengthened. When the ship was ready, the floating derrick came alongside with them and it was beautiful to see these immense boilers lifted and landed just in the bed prepared to receive them. They were nearly eight feet above the rail, and the smokestacks reached half way to the main-top. I did not like such a deck load, and thinking of the long run in the Indian Ocean before the westerly gales and of the ship's rolling for days and weeks, I could not avoid anxiety as to what would happen if those immense weights should break adrift. However, they were lashed securely with chains and wedged most carefully. They were to go to China, and I was to be the Captain of the ship to take them there, and I made the best of it. We had for passengers Captain McDonald, who was to have charge of the steamer in China, Mr. Laing and his son, engineers, three carpenters and machinists to put the boat together,

and four missionaries with their wives, quite a full cabin. Some of my Lascars had been enticed away, and as no white sailors would ship with them, I had to take black sailors, and I had nine men as black as they are made.

Being ready for sea we left New York on the twenty-fifth of October, 1862, with a light northerly wind hauling to the eastward, which ended the next day with a fresh gale with heavy rain. The second day had heavy gale from southeast, and as it was dead ahead we made small progress. The third day was still worse; we lost our mainsail and jib and one of the quarter boats was washed from the davits. October thirtieth, five days out, the wind hauled to the northwest and we scudded before it and had a chance to see how the boilers were going to hold. We found at the end of the storm that they had not moved a particle; they were as firm as the ship itself, and all hands were much relieved as well as myself. With light winds and fine weather we reached latitude  $5^{\circ}$  north, where we took the southeast trade winds and crossed the line twenty-eight days out. November twenty-sixth we made the Brazilian coast, near San Miguel. Had a beating match along the coast and a fine view of Pernambuco and Olinda. December first, passed within six miles of Trinidad and with variable winds and nothing remarkable occurring, we carried the boilers safely through the Indian Ocean, and on the fifteenth day of January, 1863, made the Straits of Allas and at two P.M. came to anchor in Bally roads.

We found the American ship *Rapid* badly on shore and half full of water. She was loaded with coal, and if we had been in ballast I could have made a good deal of money by taking it to Hong Kong, as the ship and cargo were to be sold for a mere song. At the request of the Captain, I took the crew on board as passengers to Hong Kong, but

they had been on shore too long and had taken the deadly Java fever, and three of them died before we reached the Pacific Ocean, and if it had not been for the care and medical skill of the missionaries who nursed them, I believe all of them would have died, for every one was taken sick. Fortunately none of my own crew took the disease.

January the twenty-fourth, came to anchor in Cajeli Bay for water. It was just about fifteen years since I first anchored in this bay to get water and spars, after being dismasted in the Indian Ocean in the ship *Houqua*, on my first voyage as Master, and I found many changes. There was a new governor and no one who remembered me, but we were cordially received by the Dutch governor, and myself and all the passengers were dined and feasted by him and his household. We were there two days, and as it rained heavily, it was tedious work taking the water casks on shore and towing them back to the ship. On the twenty-sixth of January we took advantage of the land breeze and at ten P.M. sailed out of the harbor.

For three days we met light winds and calms and on the fifth of February we were becalmed off St. Andrews Island, latitude  $7^{\circ}$  north,  $132^{\circ}$  east longitude. Some fifteen or twenty canoes, with nearly one hundred and fifty natives, all naked and tattooed from head to foot, surrounded the ship; but I would not allow one of them on board, and as I had a big crew of Lascars and negroes, we were enabled to show a row of faces from the bow to the stern. We bought all their yams and fruit and most of them left. There was one boat, however, that kept by us and begged for tobacco. A plug was hove overboard and the whole crew jumped after it. The steward then brought up an old white hat and threw it over, and they went after that. Soon one man stood up in the canoe with the hat on his

head and quite proud of himself. That was all he had on. Then some one threw over a pair of drawers, another an undershirt, till at last the whole crew stood up in the canoe, each with an article of dress on, forming one of the most comical sights I ever saw. I have always regretted that I had no camera to take a photo of them.

We soon got a fine breeze and went on our way, and on February fourteenth took a pilot and anchored in Hong Kong, one hundred and twelve days from New York, a very good passage by the Eastern route. We sailed the next day for Whampoa to discharge our cargo. I was agreeably disappointed in finding I should have no trouble in discharging the heavy boilers, as a large wharf had been built and a fine large derrick, capable of lifting the heaviest of machinery, was erected upon it. We anchored and moored close to the wharf, and discharged most of the woodwork of the steamer, which lightened the ship so we could haul alongside the wharf and be afloat at low tide. We were not long in doing it and were soon under the derrick, and the boilers were landed almost as easily as they were put on board. I was greatly relieved when it was over with no accident and no damage.

Many men were put to work and the building of the steamer progressed so rapidly that before we sailed again, two months from the time we began to unload, she was launched, and christened the *Thomas Hunt*. Of course it took many months to finish her deck and cabin fittings. She was a very pretty boat and did good work carrying passengers between Hong Kong and Canton.

There being no chance for a home cargo it was resolved to send the *N. B. Palmer* to San Francisco with tea, rice and sugar, freights being very good. We took in most of the cargo in Whampoa, but filled up in Hong Kong, and



after two months and a half in port we left, the thirtieth of May, for San Francisco. We had quite a large number of passengers, most of them minstrels under Charles Baekus; and one sick man, a Mr. Mackintosh, who was in hopes to get home to his wife and brothers. Poor fellow! he died when we were twenty-three days out and I had to bury him at sea, as there were no means of preserving the body.

We had the usual stormy weather and days of light winds, but made a good passage of forty-four days from Hong Kong. We took a pilot off the Farallones and anchored in San Francisco at six P.M. of the twelfth of July, 1863. I had been quite sick on the voyage over, and as the Civil War was now at its height, and the *Alabama* in the China Sea (and as the *N. B. Palmer* which was to go back to China might be detained there an indefinite time) I consulted the consignees, who telegraphed to A. A. Low & Bros. for liberty to make Mr. Joseph Steele (my mate) Master of the ship, so that I could return home by way of Panama. A favorable answer was returned, and a few days before the ship sailed for China, I made Mr. Steele Captain.

Shortly after she sailed I took passage in the steamer *Golden Age* for Panama. I was very glad to make a voyage in an ocean steamer, as I had never been in one and I had heard how they went ahead through high seas and cared nothing for head winds. The *Golden Age* was a fine steamer, but nothing like those that crossed the Atlantic between New York and Liverpool. She had state-rooms above the deck and a hurricane deck running to her bows and a good deal of top hamper. While she was getting ready for sea I often went on board, and I expressed to the Captain and mate my desire to see a gale

of wind on the passage, to see what weather she would make of it, and they remembered it.

We started the first week in August with fine weather. We had over one hundred passengers, and a very pleasant set of people. The fare was excellent—for almost everything could be had in San Francisco in the way of eatables—and everything was pleasant. The Captain was a young man and very attentive to his passengers. All went well, the ocean as smooth as could be and the weather warm and pleasant till we neared Cape Corientes. At six A.M. the mate came to my room and called, "Captain Low, if you want to see a gale of wind, now is your chance." My state-room looked out on the ocean, so I looked out, but to my thinking there was but a very small gale blowing and I turned over and went to sleep again. At seven the Captain came and called me to see a gale of wind. At that I got up, thinking there must be something to see. I dressed leisurely and went down on the main deck, and I saw that if it was *not* blowing very hard, the steamer was making bad weather of it. The sea was washing over the deck abaft the paddle boxes—for she was a side wheeler. I went up to the Captain's room and looked at the barometer, which was quite low and some three-tenths below where it had been set. I then went out to the forward part of the boat where the Captain was standing outside the wheel box. The steamer was motionless and lying in the trough of the sea, in a very dangerous position. The wind was blowing hard. I said nothing, not wishing to interfere and supposing the Captain knew what he was about; but a heavier gust of wind came, lifting the hurricane deck over the forward deck, so that some of the stanchions fell out, and at the same time throwing the steamer over so that the guards went under and a lot of

sheep were washed into the sea. The second officer was hurled across the deck, breaking his arm. I felt it was time to speak and I touched the Captain's arm and said to him, "Your vessel is in a dangerous position; you must do something to bring her head to the sea, or she will go over and drown us all." He said something about the engine being on the centre and he could not get headway. I asked him if he had no after sail to set. I knew she carried sail, but it seems there was none bent. Then I asked him if I should try and find some way to get her head to the sea. He thanked me and I jumped up on the hurricane deck and looked aft. Then I saw the curtains that were hauled down in fine weather to keep the sun off when low down. I then went to the Captain and requested him to order some men to help me, and when they came I ordered them to loose the curtains and trice them down to the deck. It was a hard job, for it was blowing a fierce gale, but the effect on the ship was immediate, for it brought her head to the sea and she was as steady as could be. I took the second mate's place and worked the awnings for some hours, and the gale did not last long. By five P.M. the steamer was started on her course again, but I really believe if I had not been on board she would have foundered with all on board. The passengers realized their danger and my help; they held a meeting in the cabin the next day and passed resolutions thanking me for my prompt action. As for myself, I concluded I would rather have a good sailing ship than a steamer, any time. The Captain said it was the first real gale of wind he had ever seen and he had been in the trade ten years—he was no sailor, evidently. After the gale we had fine weather and reached Panama in safety. I was agreeably disappointed in the trip across the Isth-

mus, for instead of being very hot, it was very pleasant, and I enjoyed the ride immensely. At Aspinwall we took the steamer *Colon*, Captain Finklepaugh, for New York. There was a great difference in the living on board. Ships from New York lay in provisions enough to last out and home, kept in ice houses, but the ice had given out and the meats had spoiled, so we had to put up with a diet of beans, salt pork and salt beef, with ham and eggs occasionally. There was much growling among the California passengers, but the weather was pleasant and after a short passage we arrived in New York. My family were all in South Danvers, so in a few days I went on to join them.

I had been at home some eight months when my brothers Abbot and Josiah proposed that my brother Edward and myself should go into business together in New York. I agreed to this and we hired part of the store next to A. A. Low & Bros., laid in a stock of teas and China goods, and did very well. As it looked like a permanent thing, I sold my place and moved my family on to Brooklyn, where my brother Abbot rented me the house on Joralemon St., No. 150, a very pleasant house near Court St. Our business prospered and I was contented till I heard of Captain Steele's long passages in my old ship the *N. B. Palmer*. He made a very long passage from San Francisco, and then one of over one hundred and fifty days from China to New York. Again leaving New York he had another very long passage to China, I think nearly one hundred and sixty days. This worried me very much.

In the summer of 1866, I with quite a number of Brooklyn men, started the Atlantic Yacht Club; and I purchased the yacht *Annie Laurie*, a sloop, forty feet long and very comfortable, a good sea-boat and a good sailer.

I had a very nice time in her and made several excursions down the Sound, but it took too much money, and time too, so I sold her, after owning her eighteen months. She went into the fishing business and I never saw her again.

Our business was very good till the winter of 1867 and 1868, when there was a great crash and we thought we had better close out. The *N. B. Palmer* had made another long passage home; my brothers offered me command of her again and I jumped at the offer. I left my brother Edward to close up the business, and took to the ship with as much pleasure as when I first went to sea. I secured Captain Nairn, a Scotchman, as chief mate, a man who had commanded one of the finest ships out of New York, the *Jeremiah Thompson*, but another captain had bought him out, and as captains were very plenty he had to take a mate's berth. When he came to me I asked him if, after having commanded, he could serve willingly as chief mate. He said he was able and willing to do mate's duty, and so he was. I never had so good a mate as he proved to be; a thorough sailor and disciplinarian, he was firm and made every sailor obey and respect him. I had been on shore over four years, and I thought everything would have to be learned over again, but as soon as I stepped my foot on board the ship I was perfectly at home and would not have known that I had been on shore at all.

We left New York May fifteenth, 1868, for Hong Kong. I was alone in the big cabin, for there were no passengers. The railroad across the continent to San Francisco and the Pacific mail steamers from that port to China and Japan took all the passengers in half the time and at less expense. For a few days I was very lonesome, but I soon got used to it and spent most of my time on deck

looking after the ship. Our start, from the time the pilot left us was very discouraging; light head winds and calms for four days, at the end of which we were not over two hundred miles from New York. We then took a gale from southeast veering to the south, and on the fourteenth day out we came up with the clipper ship *Game Cock*, which left five days before us. We were in company five days, when we left her out of sight astern. We crossed the line twenty-six days from New York and had a fair run to the longitude of the Cape of Good Hope, but from there the winds held to the south and east so as to prevent my getting south as far as I wanted to go. I was in latitude  $34^{\circ}$  when I should have been in  $39^{\circ}$  or  $40^{\circ}$ . However, I managed to get along and hove to off Anjer in seventy-eight days from New York, a very good passage after all, and after twelve more days reached Hong Kong, ninety days from New York, the first decent passage the ship had made for four years.

We were kept in Hong Kong over five weeks waiting orders. On September twenty-second we left for Yokohama to load for New York. We had light winds and calms till we passed Formosa, when we had a variety of weather, short gales and calms, and on the sixteenth of October a hard gale, when we hove to off Cape Idsu, Japan. At four A.M. a Japanese junk running before the gale struck us in the port quarter and stove a hole just above the cabin floor, a foot above the water, nearly three feet square. We managed to batten two thicknesses of stout canvas over it which kept the water out, and as it was on the weather side most of the time, we got along very well. At seven A.M. we took a pilot off Susaki, were all day beating up the Uraga Channel, and at eight P.M. anchored off Yokohama, twenty-eight days from Hong



Kong. The weather was very unpleasant. The residents said it had been raining since the first of May. Soon after we arrived it began to snow and was very cold.

The Japanese are not so pleasant to deal with as the Chinese. The reason why I did not like them was because there were so few who could speak English. The Japanese language is very easy to acquire and the foreigners all spoke it, or enough of it to carry on their business, so the natives did not in those days try to learn English.

The entrance to the harbor, in fact the whole coast of Japan, is very beautiful, and as we had to beat all the way along we had a fine view of the different landscapes, the ground being cultivated from the shore to the top of the hills with different plants, showing many colored squares, a most pleasing effect. Yokohama is a very good place to live. The English and American business houses are very similar to those in China, the head men and clerks living like princes, and having on their tables good meats and fish and plenty of game. In fact Japan and China have everything in plenty to suit the palate. The Japanese are not troubled with much modesty; their bath houses are on the streets and men and women bathe in full sight of all passers.

After lying in the harbor for over two months we began to load for home. The stevedores are not as smart as the Chinese, but still did well. About ten days before we were ready to sail, a clipper English bark was ready for sea, and the Captain had a talk with my mate. He said he was going to New York and that when we arrived he would be on the wharf to take our hawser. Mr. Nairn told him he did not know what he was saying; that Captain Low knew every wave that rolled and every wind that blew between Yokohama and New York, and it was more

likely that we should be in New York to welcome him. To end the story, we left a fortnight after him and arrived in New York thirty-five days before him, had discharged our cargo and were nearly loaded before he arrived. His excuse was that he went to the eastward of Bermuda and had a hard time getting to the westward.

On the first of January we got under weigh and proceeded to sea. The first day out four of the crew were laid up with typhus fever and were very sick. On the ninth day Albert Pitman, a fine young seaman, died, and on the sixteenth Dexter Howard, my third mate, died; both were buried at sea. The others recovered, but were not able to do duty for some weeks. Considering the time of year, we had a long passage of twenty-five days to Anjer. Instead of strong northeast monsoon we had light winds with much rain and unpleasant weather. We passed Cape of Good Hope fifty-six days from Yokohama. We met light trades and baffling winds in the South Atlantic and were eighty days out before crossing the line. We took a pilot on the sixteenth of April, one hundred and six days from Yokohama, a long passage for me, but a great improvement on the last three passages.

After six weeks on shore, on the second of June, 1869, I again set sail for Shanghai, Mr. Nairn with me as mate and no passengers. I started in to copy all my journals in new books, as the old ones were wearing out. It was a big job, but it passed the time away when I was tired of being on deck. However, it was not often I felt tired when there was a good breeze, or when there was something to do in trimming sails to a baffling wind. We had a long passage of thirty days to the line and it seemed to me there was getting to be less wind all the time. We saw many vessels bound home, but not near enough to

send letters. We got our first heavy weather in 38° south, 26° west. We had it all the time we were running down our easting, and we made good time, passing Anjer in seventy-seven days from New York. We also had a good passage up the China Sea. Took a pilot off Lenconna from pilot boat number seven, ninety-five days from New York, a fine passage considering we were thirty days to the line in the Atlantic. We were fortunate in getting up the river, and anchored off Shanghai on the eighth of September. We were in Shanghai three months before we could get a cargo of tea, as the Chinese merehants held out for higher prices and the English and American merchants refused to pay. There were a large number of vessels of both nations in port, and the Chinaman said to the merehants, "Too many ships in Shanghai; cost too much money; must have tea; Chinaman in no hurry, bye and bye must pay Chinaman's price." And sure enough, first the English yielded, then the rest followed, and the Chinese merehants won the game. Hard work to get ahead of them! There were many shipmasters with their wives, and I had a very pleasant time, living on shore a good part of the time with Smith, Archer & Co., but I went afloat every day, visiting the different ships. Although the weather was very cold and there was much snow, it melted in a short time so that little remained on the ground.

My brother Edward and his wife were there (in Shanghai) and were to go home with me. He had been an invalid for a number of years and had made the voyage to China in hopes of reeovering his health. He had improved much but was far from well. I was very glad to have their company home.

On December second, 1869 we started down the river

and anchored in Woosung where we lay wind bound till the sixth, the wind blowing so hard we could not beat down the Yang-tse River with safety. On the sixth we got under weigh and at half past twelve the pilot left us off the light ship in a strong, north northeast wind and dark, cloudy weather. We passed Hong Kong in seventy-two hours from Shanghai, and sent a letter on shore by a pilot boat which reported us. The weather continued cloudy, with fresh breezes till we neared the Natunas Islands. Just south of these islands we had a heavy squall, called a "Sumatra," when we had to take in everything but close-reefed topsails and lost a main-topsail-staysail. These squalls come up very suddenly, with a single flash of lightning in the west as the warning, and you must get sail in as quickly as possible. In this season they occur almost daily and we had heavy squalls as far down as Gaspar Straits. We passed Anjer in fourteen days from Shanghai, a good passage; had strong winds beating down the straits. On the fifteenth day we passed Prince's Island, having very light winds to 15° south latitude, when we took the southeast trades and had a good run to Madagascar. There we met heavy gales with thunder and lightning, which continued to Cape Padrone on the coast of Africa. The current here runs rapidly to the southwest, and the wind blowing contrary, or against the current, made a very bad sea, tossing the ship about in a most uncomfortable manner. My brother and his wife were good sailors, however, and stood it bravely. Off L'Agulhas Bank we caught several fish, but did not stop to fish. We passed Cape of Good Hope on the twenty-ninth of January, 1870. With moderate trades we crossed the line in seventy-seven days from Shanghai and had light northeast trades and baffling winds

to Cape Hatteras, where we took a heavy gale from northwest and in the Gulf Stream we were hove to for three days in a furious gale with heavy squalls of snow and hail. On the twentieth of March it moderated, and we made sail, and on the twenty-second made Fire Island Light at eight P.M. At seven A.M. on the twenty-third took a pilot and reached New York early in the afternoon, one hundred and six days from Shanghai.

I had a pleasant sojourn with my family for six weeks, until the ship was again loaded and ready to sail for China, Hong Kong being the first port to call at. There was nothing worthy of note on the passage out. We had the usual variable weather and passed Anjer eighty days from New York, and anchored in Hong Kong on the fifteenth of August, 1870, ninety-three days from New York, a very good passage.

We discharged our cargo and took in a half cargo of cotton goods and sailed for Shanghai the twenty-ninth of August. The southwest monsoon was over and we had calms and light winds from southwest to north northeast to 25° north latitude, where we met strong breezes from north northeast and dead ahead, but on the sixteenth of September we took a pilot from boat No. 5 off the Saddle Islands, and with a good passage up the river anchored in Shanghai on the eighteenth of September, seventeen days from Hong Kong.

After six weeks in Shanghai, with nothing worthy of note to remark upon, we left for New York on the thirtieth of October with a full cargo of teas. After a long passage of twenty-six days we put into Anjer for medical assistance, four or five of my men being down with typhus fever. We lay at anchor for four days, until the sick men were out of danger, and on November twenty-ninth we got under

weigh and proceeded down the straits. January third, 1871 we were off L'Agulhas Bank and caught eight fine fish, one weighing forty-five and another thirty pounds. We rounded the Cape of Good Hope at nine thirty A.M. the next morning. Crossed the line eighty-five days from Shanghai. In 6° north latitude we found our main-mast very badly sprung, and I sent down the royal and skysail yards, also the main-topgallant yard. February third, sent down main-topgallant mast. On February ninth we entered the Gulf and for three days had heavy gales with hail and snow. On the thirteenth we took a pilot off Barnegat in a strong gale from north and north-north-east, followed on the fifteenth by a heavy snow storm. A steam tug took us in tow at nine A.M. and we hauled alongside Prentiss' wharf at four P.M., glad enough to be at home again.

April 26, 1871, I sailed again for Hong Kong, making the passage without incident in one hundred and three days and twelve hours, arriving on August seventh, 1871 in Hong Kong, where I found orders to proceed to Shanghai. After discharging our freight, we left on August eighteenth and with light winds proceeded on our way. On the seventh day out we took a pilot from cutter No. 2 and at seven P.M. came to anchor off Gutzlaff Island; at five A.M. got under weigh, at noon came to anchor; at four thirty P.M. the steamer *Samson* took us in tow; at eight P.M. we anchored at Woosung, and on the morning after, we proceeded to Shanghai, hauling alongside of Oliphant's wharf at three P.M. This taking a pilot out of a cutter and being towed into port by a steamer was something new in my experience and it made the passage of the Yang-tse very much easier. And then to haul alongside of a wharf was equally new in a Chinese port.



But being close to the land was not so pleasant, for the men went ashore just when they pleased and it was hard to keep them at work. However, we were not long in Shanghai and as soon as the cargo was out we hauled out to our moorings in the river.

We had been in Shanghai a little over a month, when we were loaded for New York and on the fifth of October we were towed down the river, discharging the pilot on the sixth at eight thirty A.M. At noon, when abreast of Chesung Island, the weather became very threatening, barometer being quite low; but the wind was fair and I hoped to get ahead of a typhoon, if there was one. On the seventh the wind blew a gale with a very heavy sea and at one P.M. a sea struck the port quarter, carrying away a quarter boat and doing other damage. The heavy gale lasted all day and continued on the eighth. We were scudding under close-reefed fore and main-topsails. At seven A.M. of the ninth there was a furious hurricane. We lay the ship to under bare poles; at noon, the wind moderating, made sail and proceeded down the China Sea. With light winds and cloudy weather and calms we had a long passage to Anjer, being twenty-eight days before passing Java Head. With moderate breezes across the Indian Ocean we passed Cape of Good Hope sixty days from Shanghai and had moderate trades and beautiful weather from the Cape to the equator, with no incident worthy of mention; very light northeast trades and baffling winds to Cape Hatteras, where we struck winter weather, and had hard gales with snow, rain and hail for four days, and then light winds, and then a southerly gale with heavy rain, which carried us to Barnegat, where we took a pilot from boat No. 10, reaching New York January twentieth, 1872, after a passage of one hundred and seven days.

After a two months' stay at home, on the twenty-first of March, 1872, I again sailed in the *N. B. Palmer* for Shanghai, with a most combustible cargo, coal, lumber kerosene oil, cotton goods and tar and pitch in the forehold. I often wondered, if we were struck by lightning, how long it would take for the ship to be destroyed! However, my thoughts did not dwell on any such catastrophe, especially on the day of sailing. On that day it was very cold, thermometer only twenty degrees above zero, and a brisk breeze blowing, with snow squalls, which on the third day out increased to a heavy gale. We soon left the cold behind us, but it blew heavily for some days, and we made good progress, crossing the equator in twenty-four days from New York. I shall not go into details, as a voyage at sea is monotonous to tell about, though exciting to live through. One who loves the sailing of a ship is always watching for the wind to blow, and the wind is never in the same quarter for any length of time, and the sails have to be trimmed very often and the yards braced forwards or squared, to catch the veering winds. In the trade winds from Cape of Good Hope you can run for weeks without altering the yards, in which time you can trice up all the running rigging clear of the rails, tar down all the standing rigging, scrape and oil the masts, paint the ship inside and out, holystone and oil the decks and have her all ready to go into port in good shape; but in the variable winds you must have everything ready for bad weather at any time.

June seventeenth we anchored in Anjer Roads, eighty-eight days from New York, took in the usual supply of chickens, ducks, green turtles, fruit, vegetables and fresh water; and sailed on the eighteenth, proceeding with light winds up the China Sea. After passing the Natunas Islands, we had moderate southwest monsoon with cloudy,

rainy weather. July sixth we took a pilot off East Saddle Island, one hundred and six days from New York; arrived in Shanghai on the eighth, and moored ship off the factories, or American hong.

The prospect for an early departure for home was not encouraging. There were many ships in port which had been there for some time. I however, passed the time away very pleasantly, living mostly at Smith, Archer & Co.'s house. But it was very tedious waiting for a cargo, as it was not till the nineteenth of October that we finished loading, after three months and eleven days in port.

At one A.M. we left the pilot off the bar and proceeded to sea. At five P.M. passed the Saddle Islands with fine breeze from the northwest and in the short passage of seventy-two hours hove to off Pedro Blanco and sent letter by pilot to Hong Kong. After starting so finely I looked for a short passage to Anjer. We carried the wind to 6° north latitude, then experienced light winds and calms with heavy squalls, and did not reach Anjer till the tenth of November, twenty three days from Shanghai. Passed the Cape of Good Hope in sixty-three days; crossed the line in eighty-five days and took a pilot February third, 1873, one hundred and eight days from Shanghai.

After the cargo was discharged my brothers concluded to sell the ship. My mother had died before I got home and as I was tired of being away from my family ten months or a year and at home only some six weeks, I gave up the sea. Mr. Nairn, my chief mate, took command, for which I was very thankful, for he had served me faithfully for five years and deserved the place.











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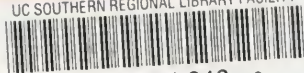
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